

# **Strategic Review for Southern Africa**

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# Strategic Review for Southern Africa

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Siphamandla Zondi

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## Aims and Scope

The *Strategic Review for Southern Africa* is an accredited on-access journal listed in the IBSS index. It has since 1978 been a platform for strategic and political analyses of themes and socio-political developments that impact on or provide lessons for Southern Africa. As a multi-disciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary journal, the Strategic Review facilitates vigorous and enlightened debate among scholars, policy makers, practitioners, students and activists in order to contribute to the wider global discourse on changing strategic and political dynamics within and beyond nation states.

The journal publishes two regular issues a year (May/June and November/December) with a possibility of one additional guest special issue per year as need justifies, subject to editorial group approval. Issues are available mainly as an open access online platform licensed under creative commons. Printed copies can be ordered. All submissions are subject to double-blind peer review by at least two appropriately qualified reviewers.

The *Strategic Review* invites submissions sent electronically to: [strategicreviewsa@gmail.com](mailto:strategicreviewsa@gmail.com) conforming to author's guide.

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## THE EDITORIAL





## Editorial

### The state of static dynamism

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#### Siphamandla Zondi

University of Johannesburg

Editor in Chief

The year 2021 ended with the world under the grip of the fourth wave of Covid-19, driven largely by the new variant known as Omicron. This is a constant reminder of how vulnerable our society is to ever-changing disease situations in general and the emergence of variants evading pharmacopoeia used to manage previous variants. This leads to a constant interface between change and regress, a sort of static dynamism.

The more the world prospers, the more the inequalities between the wealthy and poor expand. These leave the poor most vulnerable to calamities like the Covid-19, where lack of access to quality and affordable healthcare means almost certain morbidity or mortality for the poor. While Covid-19 is our biggest immediate crisis, poverty and inequality are age-old and remain the most enduring crises further complicating the Covid-19 pandemic. This affects black women on the periphery more than another group.

The Covid-19 has taught the world just how crucial it is to strengthen international cooperation to exchange tools, tears, and technologies to confront this shared threat. It has made global and regional organisations ever more important. The threat has also united the world about basics needed, including keeping basic hygiene, face-masking and keeping a safe physical distance from each other so as not to transmit the virus. We hear that there has been minimal transmission of other seasonal viruses that usually affect us every year as a result. We have seen amazing international solidarity at times.

Nevertheless, with the progress in international cooperation, we have seen the hydra of right-wing nationalism and racist attitude from rich nations rear its head. This includes the decision by the rich nations of the west to hoard potentially life-saving vaccines, reserving them for their populations first when the whole world needed them. They bought all early vaccines making it hard

for even developing countries with the means to purchase any vaccines to do so, thus delaying the start of vaccination in the South. Then, once all willing citizens of the North had been vaccinated, the North still hoarded most of the vaccines.

A few weeks ago, South African scientists identified the latest variant. Then, we saw a new round of this discrimination in the decision of several western nations to impose a travel ban on southern African countries ostensibly to contain the spread of Omicron. Even when it turned out the variant was present in Europe before it was identified in South Africa, the travel bans continued to project African countries as a source of disease to Europe. The cartoon by a Spanish newspaper showing a shipload of South Africans crossing the Mediterranean Sea with Omicron variant like the tweet by a prominent US politician alleging that South Africans were breaching the US southern border carrying a Covid-19 represent the deep-seated anti-black racism the west still needs to deal with. This comes on the back of the continued booing of black soccer players in some European countries. The focus on Covid-19 is said to be starving many other global challenges of their attention, meaning we will soon have to deal with various crises simultaneously.

This is our last edition as an editorial collective appointed in 2018, consisting of Profs Everisto Benyera, Kgothatso Shai and myself. We present a mixture of work by seasoned and emerging scholars, covering subjects as varied as notions of being and belonging, human security, social security, crisis management, political parties and policies, liberation movements, foreign policy, financial inclusion, and two articles on Covid-19 issues. Articles on vaccine nationalism and collective African responses to Covid-19 are timely. The book review on foreign policy and national interest suggests some issues for future discussion, which we hope scholars will take up. Certainly, the more things change in all these themes, the more they remain the same, a sort of static dynamism.

We wish to thank the many dedicated reviewers for sterling work supporting the journal, a contribution that protects the quality and pedigree of a journal such as this. This edition benefitted from excellent reviews by phenomenal reviewers: Frank Lekaba, Salome Delaila, Moorosi Leshoele, Rich Mashimbye, Chido Nyere, Tinuade Ojo, Hlengiwe Phetha, Makhura Rapanyane, Alex Rusero, Lebogang Legodi, Siphumelele Duma, Johannes Mancha, Crystal Gradwell, Oluwaseun Tella, Enock Ndawana, Norman Sempijja, Lebohang Tiego, Keobaka Tsholo, Fred Bidandi, Kamogelo Segone, Edwin Yingyi, Alexis Ninsin, Thulisile

Mphambukeli, and Gideon Chitanga.

We also wish to thank Ms Heather Thusynma, who has been unfailing in her support for this journal, making the work of the editors much less daunting than it would have been. I thank my colleagues in the editorial collective and wish them well in their future endeavours.

### **Dedication**

We wish to dedicate this edition to the late Mr Skhumbuzo Zondi (no blood relative), a PhD student close to finishing his PhD studies on human security in Southern Africa through Unisa's Department of Development Studies. He passed away in early November 2021, having completed the revision of his paper. We say hamba kahle Nondaba, Gaga she, Luqa, Nhlabshile.

Cheers!

Siphamandla Zondi

*Editor-in-Chief*



## RESEARCH ARTICLES





# Do Transitions from Liberation Movements to Political Parties Guarantee Good Governance? The Case of ZANU-PF and the ANC

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the transition of liberation movements into political parties and whether that guarantees good governance or not. Since the end of the Second World War and the Cold War, the number of democratic states has increased on all continents. African states began to explore democratic governance from independence and the end of apartheid. Furthermore, the liberation struggle fought by many African movements led to independence and 'decolonisation'. The emergence of these liberation movements was to emancipate and liberate their respective states so that the rule of oppressive imperialists such as the British could come to an end. The transition of the former colonial states ensured that the movements which fought the liberation struggle turned into political parties. The study uses the cases of the Zimbabwe African National-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) in Zimbabwe and the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa to interrogate the transition into political parties and examine if good governance has been achieved because of that. The study has found that the implications of former liberation movements turning into political parties have not had the foreseen intentions. With the neo-patrimonial theory, the study substantially examines whether ZANU-PF and the ANC have been in accordance with or against the dynamics of good governance informed by liberalism values.

**Keywords:** Liberation Movements, Political Parties, ZANU-PF, ANC, Good Governance, Accountability, Rule of Law, Government Efficiency.

## 1. Introduction

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, many African states adopted a system of democracy. The problem for African States with this democracy would be that it was Eurocentric. Due to the fight for liberation, many African liberation movements had been conditioned during negotiations for independence to accept democracy as the new system of governance. Democracy came with a very crucial point of transition. The transition not only occurred for the political system of the liberated states, but it also came, by default, for the liberation movements themselves. Through a democratic elections procedure, ZANU in 1980 and the ANC in 1994 switched from being freedom fighters into political parties contesting for political power and the ruling governments of their respective states. In Southern Africa, the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) transitioned from a liberation movement to a political party. However, the study did not use SWAPO in Namibia because, at its independence in 1990, its former coloniser (South Africa) retained 'enormous power of its former colony' (Saunders 2017). Furthermore, the study uses the cases studies of ZANU-PF and the ANC because they are former liberation movements that advanced their struggle under British Empire rule, even though the ANC did so indirectly under the Union of South Africa when it was first established in 1912.

In as much as ZANU-PF and the ANC function as a single structure in their respective states, as former liberation movements and the incumbents of governance, operations of the former liberation movements do not necessarily have to maintain the current operations of governance. Clapham (2012) differentiates the transformation of liberation movements into political parties as deconditioning from winning the war against colonial oppression and imperialism to winning and championing the new emerging war against socio-political and economic issues about poverty, governance as a holistic concept, unemployment, and development. Idowu (2020) argues that good governance in Africa has been a major challenge facing the continent and that people have been denied good governance over the years. While liberation movements in Africa were key structures that fought against colonisation; they have not been able to chart a functioning government for their respective states (Idowu 2020).

Fighting a war as a liberation movement is an action that only wants the result of the victory and triumphs over oppression, whereas running a government as

a political party involves multiple goals, priorities, and interests to be considered to provide good governance as the most valuable variable (Clapham 2012). Furthermore, once the liberation struggle has been completed, what used to be a liberation movement transitions into a political party, as ZANU-PF and the ANC have done, and assumes power to be the incumbent of a national government in the State. It could be argued that the problem with this transition for these liberation movements is that they never got the opportunity to learn how to conduct themselves as political parties in power. Zondi (2017) states that the liberation movements were so preoccupied with fighting for freedom that the chance to train how to function in office never presented itself. Anan (2010) says, 'Good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development'.

African Union's 50-year development and transformation programme denotes that good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law are key in Africa's political and economic transformation (Mbaku 2020). Moreover, the African Development Bank (2016) states that good governance should be built on an 'effective state, mobilised civil societies and an effective private sector'. With these three stakeholders, governance management is ensured not to be limited to the government alone (Sharma 2018). According to Mbaku (2020), African states have continued to build on the governance gains achieved since independence. However, this has been met with many challenges. Among the challenges, corruption, democratic erosion, leadership challenge, state capture of relevant institutions, and insecurity are eminent (Idowu 2020).

The crucial transition from being a liberation movement into a political party is intense and very important to each State's new era. Consequently, given that politics resides in a global community, the transitional breakthrough must be made with precision so that it does not have a negative political ripple effect on the rest of the world. That kind of effect could also affect the international political economy. The Lancaster House Agreement and the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) [also the Multi-Party Negotiation Forum after CODESA 2 broke down in 1993] functioned as robust negotiation platforms for both ZANU-PF and the ANC because, during the negotiations, new constitutional dispensations were discussed, which allowed the movements to turn into political parties (Hating & Brink 2000).

The difficult transition raises questions about whether the former liberation

movements were ready to govern and whether governance under their leadership guarantees good governance holistically with their struggle credentials. According to Huntington (1991: 9), democracy involves free and fair elections and refers to the French Revolution's dictum of 'liberty, equality and fraternity' as a benchmark for the ideology. Due to the struggle for freedom these liberation movements had engaged in, they have been granted unlimited freedom of authority by the principles of democracy they have fought for. Secondly, the liberation movements have articulated the ills of the previous government, but it is not clear that their rhetoric will translate into better governance. Lastly, unlike South Africa, Zimbabwe did not have a coordinated rubric for post-conflict governance, especially as most African countries had been caught up in the politics of the Cold War.

Given these insecurities about governance, the study question is, to what extent has the transition of ZANU-PF and the ANC from liberation movements to political parties led to good governance in Zimbabwe and South Africa, respectively? This question uses these two southern African states to overview governance by former liberation movements across Africa. Kraay (2007) worked on the worldwide governance indicators project with the World Bank's financial institution. In his 2007 study, Kraay found six indicators of good governance for various countries, including Zimbabwe and South Africa. Out of the six, the three indicators are accountability, the rule of law, and governance efficiency.

The accountability variable is used because of how those in power (incumbents) are selected and replaced. The Rule of Law variable is used because of citizens' respect and the State's institutions that govern interactions (Kraay 2007). The governance efficiency variable is used because of the government's capacity to formulate and implement policies. This section of the study will investigate the findings of both ZANU-PF and the ANC's ability to achieve good governance by using the indicators of accountability, the rule of law, and government efficiency. This study will examine whether the transition of liberation movements to political parties guarantees good governance in Africa by looking at ZANU-PF in Zimbabwe and the ANC in South Africa.

It is important to have an explanation specifying exactly which methods were used and describe the strategy of the entire study. This study uses a mixed-methods design. The reason and purpose of this method is to clarify the qualitative results using quantitative findings. Most of the time, the literature

concerning good governance does not include statistics to correlate the status quo described through qualitative data. The quantitative data is derived from the Mo Ibrahim Foundation's Ibrahim Index of African Governance (2017) which represents the statistics of indicators in both Zimbabwe and South Africa for the years from 2000 to 2016. Mo Ibrahim index is used because it is a relevant scope for this study which bridges the gap in the literature with not personal views or political bias but qualitative data (Ibrahim 2017). The study focused on 2000 to 2016 because the latter of the 1990s were years of settling in as incumbents or negotiating towards that transition for both ZANU-PF and the ANC, respectively. The year 2000 represents the new millennium and a new political era around global politics after the Cold War. A general picture (in this case, the dynamics of good governance in Zimbabwe and South Africa) is depicted by quantitative results, which is further expanded, refined, and, most importantly, explained by the qualitative findings (Creswell 2008).

This research, firstly, explores the theoretical basis for the study and how that influences the dynamics of good governance by the two former liberation movements and explores literature around that. Following that, the study will summarise the indicators used to determine good governance. The study will only then proceed to explain the dynamics of good governance and what makes them so valuable to governance, which will be part of the findings of how ZANU-PF and the ANC govern as former liberation movements turned political parties.

## **2. Neo-patrimonialism theory.**

Much literature speaks to the struggle credentials of ZANU-PF and the ANC. Significantly, the gap thereof comes with the lack of acknowledging the fact that these liberation movements emerged in pursuit of achieving freedom (arguably if this freedom is economic, political or both). However, throughout the years of ZANU-PF and the ANC assuming power since 1980 and 1994, their governance capabilities have been questioned in terms of, among other things, accountability, government efficiency, and respect for the rule of law. The years 2000-2016 highlight patrimonialism has emanated in Zimbabwe and South Africa under ZANU-PF and the ANC.

Weber (1968), as a scholar of patrimonialism, tries to describe the forms of political authority, how legitimate they are and their domination from how they

are carried out traditionally compared to modern ones. Furthermore, Eisenstadt (1973) characterises neopatrimonialism as when states operate in patrimonial ways, in which informal institutions exist alongside formal institutions as per a liberal democracy. Chikwaza (2021) extends this definition in the case of Zimbabwe to state that neopatrimonialism, as the use of state resources for political legitimation, is used to secure voters' loyalty during the general elections. Masenya (2017) postulates that South Africa's neopatrimonialism contributes to inadequate service delivery. The neo-patrimonial theory is used to explore whether these aspects are the reasons why good governance is problematic for the governments of ZANU-PF and the ANC or not. In the case of ZANU-PF and the ANC, this would suggest that the transition into political parties from liberation movements means that good governance is questioned in their neopatrimonial operations. Whereas the former liberation movements subscribed to national liberation struggle theory to advocate for emancipation, as political parties, they try to subscribe to liberal democracy to achieve good governance, which neopatrimonialism compromises.

## **2. Literature Discussions on Good Governance and Liberation Movements**

Joseph (2001) provides an abstract definition of what would be considered good governance in a democratic dispensation. This would espouse freedom of information, a strong legal system and efficient administration, backed by political mobilisation of the disadvantaged through movements or political parties. In the twenty-first century, former liberation movements have proved to undermine their vows of upholding democratic principles as current political parties. In Africa, most former liberation movements have been the longest regimes in office, which compromises good governance. Southall (2013) adds that once former liberation movements assume office, they are characterised by emancipatory and authoritarian paradoxical qualities.

Geddes (1999) argues that there are different types of authoritarian regimes. Furthermore, Geddes (1999) articulates that these regimes are not democratic because members of civil society are prevented from exercising their democratic rights and participating willingly in democratic affairs. This compromises the concept of good governance. For example, the specific elections of Zimbabwe

in 2008 (among others) were filled with so much violence that the international community had to intervene because of the violations of human rights (Ncube 2013). The violence has come from the former liberation movement's grasp on power and seeing itself as the only true ruler of Zimbabwe. Given that ZANU-PF has led Zimbabwe into independence, it would consider its former enormously positive legacy reason enough to continue gaining authority to rule the State and be the incumbent (Clapham 2012).

With the ANC, the one-party dominance system favouring the former liberation movement compromises the concept of good governance in a democratic dispensation if state policies that are to be legislated would mostly be directed to the ruling party's interests and constituency. With the ANC arguably still considering itself a liberation movement, the political organisation benefits only those involved. Bateman (2015) substantiates this by referring to Alex Boraine as saying that the ANC is more concerned about the party and not good governance, and it conflates itself with the State. Good governance is characterised by indicators derived from the concept of democracy. The dynamics of good governance are the very things that could determine whether the former liberation movements' transition into political parties and as incumbents has guaranteed good governance.

Sharma (2010) perceives good governance as a prerequisite proponent for democracy. Indicators used by this study are the basic conceptions of a standardised democracy, which both ZANU-PF and the ANC incorporated during their transition into political parties, amongst other indicators (Hating & Brink 2000). For many African countries, colonialism has affected living standards across the whole continent. Particularly for Zimbabwe and South Africa, good governance was regarded as a process, with essential factors and variables that would primarily be a mechanism to tackle development issues, especially in the new emerging independent and poor states (Sharma 2008). For ZANU-PF and the ANC, their political participation in government is never questioned if their liberation credentials and attachment to the former struggle grant Zimbabwe and South Africa the fruits of good governance or not.

The scholarly studies and literature above deliberate more about the third wave of democratisation which former President of the United States of America, Ronald Reagan, spoke about at the latter part of the Cold War, and what Huntington wrote about in the 1990s, and how the ideology is the most

relevant in the international community in the twenty-first century.

### **3. Findings on the Dynamics of Governance.**

This section of the study will investigate the findings of both ZANU-PF and the ANC's ability to achieve good governance by using the indicators of accountability, the rule of law, and government efficiency. Of the three lines represented on the graphs, two lines represent Zimbabwe and South Africa, and the other represents the average of the African states regarding Accountability, Rule of Law, and Government Efficiency in the continent. The average line for African states' indicators is one key aspect because it proves, according to the Mo Ibrahim Index (2017), where Zimbabwe and South Africa lie on the graphs. This represents whether the states are doing well (above the average line) or badly (below the average line) in terms of Accountability, Rule of Law and Government Efficiency.

#### **3.1. Accountability**

Accountability is a factor that is deemed important for democracy and governance. Accountability as a variable determines that citizens and the State both have a role in ensuring that governance is effective and promotes democracy (Sharma 2008). Accountability would mean that members of the civil society of a state express their voice most commonly through elections, and the State's government would reciprocate that voice by making sure that the needs of the citizens and the interests of the State are met accordingly. The State has the responsibility to communicate with its constituents on the operations of the state affairs and account for the status quo.

However, both ZANU-PF and the ANC have been heavily riddled with the backlash on failing to be accountable to their citizens for many of their misfortunes. Former President of ZANU-PF and Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, has been labelled as an authoritarian who accounted only to himself and has been described as undermining the principles of democracy. Masunungure (2011) has mentioned that the Zimbabwean government under Mugabe was an authoritarian regime that only survived due to the coalition of the government and the military which would be ready to execute the type of politicking

Machiavelli illustrated in *The Prince*; that a leader must be feared (Milner 1996).

Any citizen who would question the governing ways of Mugabe would be at a security risk (Masunungure 2011: 47). The Gukurahundi Massacre of 1983 exemplifies how the government under ZANU-PF suppressed some of the Zimbabwean voices and failed to account for the heinous and brutal crimes against human rights. As juxtaposed to ZANU-PF, the ANC has had more than a few incidents whereby the ruling party in South Africa had failed to account for their inability to provide good governance and perpetuate injustices on its constituencies. The ANC's status of one-party dominance in the South African political landscape has perpetuated unfortunate circumstances, such as factional cadre deployment (Shava & Chamisa 2018: 1-2).

The ANC has been a political party, like ZANU-PF, that has occupied government based on the former liberation struggle. ANC members who have been part of that liberation struggle are known for occupying elite positions in government. Since 1994, the ANC has had victorious legitimate electoral campaigns. However, the party dominance and cadre deployment raise concerns about the decline of the government's response to public opinion and the holistic purpose of a multi-party system in a democratic dispensation (Brooks 2004: 1-4). However, there is nothing wrong with cadre deployment as a concept; problems only arise when the cadres deployed to be bureaucrats do not have the required skills or qualifications to provide good governance. Consequently, this undermines a ruling party's constitutional mandate, which fails to account for incompetency.

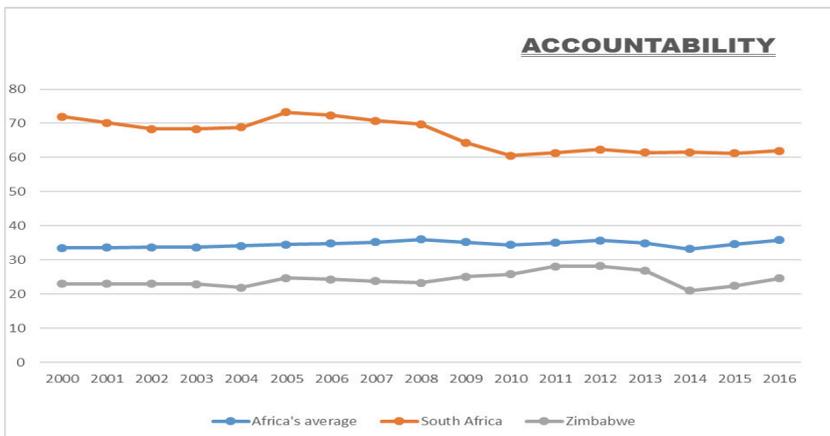
This kind of political behaviour compromises those who are qualified to develop South Africa domestically and internationally at the pace it should have. The problem with this cadre deployment is that whenever there is a misfortune due to corruption or an incident that needs to be accounted for by the government, justice never prevails because of the familiarities within the organisational structures. This shows that former liberation movements need to differentiate between governance and reward for activism during the liberation struggle. Whenever a political party rewards personal interests in the name of liberation struggles through the government institutions and resources, it undermines the guarantee of good governance. Under this subsection, accountability is invisible (Brooks 2004: 11). Twala (2014) says, 'The cadre deployment policy has been implemented by the African National Congress (ANC) and its alliance partners

in pursuit of its avowed intention to have loyal party hands on all the levers of power in government.'

Accountability is proportionally inclined in a democracy to have an inclusive aspect of constituents, not only at a state level but also in the international system. The world operates in a globalised system that includes most states in the world. This suggests that the type of governance accepted in the international community would include the variable of accountability.

The analysis of ZANU-PF and the ANC's transitions suggest that the now-renowned political parties must abide by the international standards of how to account and let the constituents' voices be heard without any security threats of democratic violation, especially that of operating as a liberation movement with the façade of a political party operating in a democracy in the twenty-first century. In International Relations, a state is recognised by its permanent population, determined territory, government, and the capacity of the State to engage with other states on an international platform. Accountability of political parties in government proves that the government is effective and abides by the rule of law; most likely, the international system would be more open to such a government regarding issues such as for example, trade.

**Figure 1: African States' Accountability**



**Source:** Mo Ibrahim Index 2017

The average of the rest of the African States' Accountability statistics was at the 30% to 35% level from 2000 to 2016. Generally, Africa as a continent lacks a sense of accountability, which would mean that African states have weak democracies. Specifically, of the states and governments understudy, Zimbabwe (under the ZANU-PF) is approximately 10% below the average line of the rest of Africa (Mo Ibrahim Index 2017).

Events such as the *Gukurahundi* Massacres in the 2000s are relevant examples of why Zimbabwe was regarded to have performed poorly by the Mo Ibrahim Index (2017) when it comes to accountability. As a perceived authoritarian regime, ZANU-PF has been a political party that does not ensure that good governance is essential. The neo-patrimonial theory would also suggest that selfish interests by the party elites abolish the concept of accountability.

Unlike Zimbabwe, South Africa, under the incumbent government of the ANC, was regarded to be doing better than its Zimbabwean counterpart but could improve. The ANC-led State averaged approximately 70% in terms of accountability, according to the Mo Ibrahim Index (2017). Even though during the first two years since 2000, South Africa had an average of 75% in accountability, the lack of hierarchy in the State's bureaucracy could be the reason why South Africa fell to the 60% level.

### **3.2. The rule of law**

Gumede (2018), 'The rule of law is the cornerstone of any constitutional democracy, ensuring that no-one is above the law and everyone is guaranteed fundamental human rights.' The Rule of Law Programme aims to protect the systems of democracy, challenge structural violence, protect civil and political rights, and challenge discrimination against people living in poverty.

The above quote has been stated to grasp the attention and expand the fundamental nature of this indicator. In the perspective of international law, many states in the global community abide by several laws which are binding through treaties because they are common and basic laws to people of the world, meaning it is in the interests of many states' foreign policy to achieve safety and safeguard their interests ultimately.

Serious efforts to entrench the rule of law in Africa came with the so-called third wave of democratisation in the 1990s. This democratic revival raised hopes of a new era of governance guided by the basic principles of constitutionalism, democracy, good governance, respect for human rights and respect for the rule of law. Promising signs of some progress have been overtaken by a steady decline, particularly in the last two decades (Fombad & Kibet 2018).

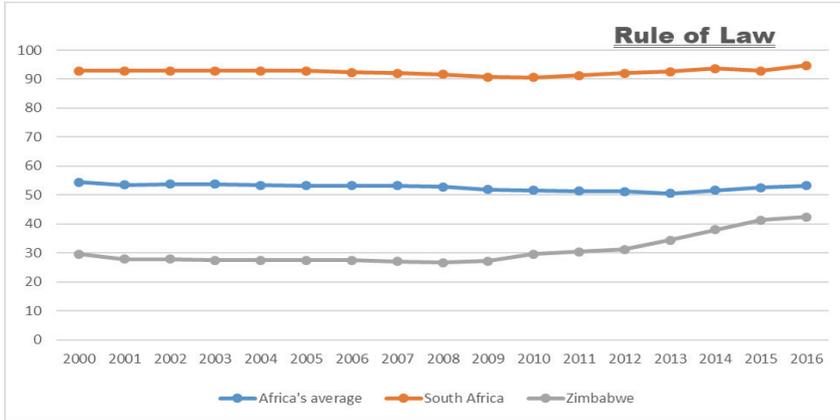
In Zimbabwe and South Africa, ZANU-PF and the ANC had to ensure both in their different struggles for freedom and democracy and as government incumbents that the Rule of Law is upheld in their states. The African Governance Report (2018) published by the United Nations (UN) has proven that the continent has progressed and improved on other government variables. However, a drop has been detected in safety, particularly in the rule of law (Fombad & Kibet 2018). ZANU-PF and the ANC's struggle for freedom in their respective states was solely to change the status quo of the legislature and, ultimately, the rule of law. With law comes order, and the standard of living is vitalised through this concept (Locke 1632).

The former liberation movements have come to obfuscate the limits of the law. ZANU-PF has been characterised mostly by violations of human rights and security threats to the people of Zimbabwe, whereas the ANC has been a conspirer to what is known as State Capture (Mbaku 2007). After the recent elections in Zimbabwe in 2018, the period of violence, which resulted in many people being hurt by the State's army and police, broke the virtue of the rule of law and undermined it. In South Africa, the issue of State Capture, as a severe form of corruption, has been the ongoing issue that delegitimised the stance of the ANC as a worthy organisation to head governance and subscribe to good governance (Mbaku 2007).

For the most part, after independence in 1980, Zimbabwe under the ZANU-PF was heavily militarised, and former President Robert Mugabe violated the rule of law on numerous occasions. Therefore, scholars such as Masunungure (2011), as previously stated, regard Zimbabwe as an authoritarian regime from the year 2000 onwards. For good governance to prevail, the State and the civil society must work together and ensure that the government's operational systems are effective and ultimately promote democratic values. Zimbabwe under President

Mugabe arguably did not experience this kind of interaction between the State and the civil society.

**Figure 2: Rule of Law**



**Source:** Mo Ibrahim Index 2017

An essential feature of the emergence of these former liberation movements was to make sure that the government rules and laws were inclusive of everyone. The rule of law essentially posits that no person is above the law. There is also a fine line and distinctive difference between ‘laws’ and the ‘rule of law’. Zimbabwe under ZANU-PF finds itself below the average line for the rest of Africa line, whereas South Africa under the ANC finds itself well above the average line for the rest of Africa and Zimbabwe.

According to the Mo Ibrahim Index (2017), Zimbabwe under ZANU-PF was averaging at the 20% level from 2000 to 2010. It was only from 2011 that Zimbabwe averaged at 30% and above. Furthermore, during 2015 and 2016, Zimbabwe had moved into the 40% average regarding the rule of law in the State. With concepts such as clientelism, nepotism and patrimonialism being prominent in the country, ZANU-PF has failed, to a large extent, to protect human rights be accessible and transparent. These positive concepts (and others) gather to form the rule of law factors. Failure to respond to these reflects negatively on the rule of law in a state and undermines the process of good

governance to take its course.

On the other hand, under the ANC, South Africa has been averaging 90% in terms of the rule of law. This is an acceptable score for South Africa and reflected well on the image of the ANC as the incumbent until corruption escalated to severe forms. The graph above suggests that South Africa has better political structures than most African states, including Zimbabwe. Therefore, the graph analyses that South Africa holds much nexus on average.

The South African Constitution clearly defines the powers of all three arms of government. This ensures that there is no overlapping of duties and responsibilities by the Legislative, Executive and Judicial arms of government. The Judicial system of South Africa is independent enough to ensure that good governance in terms of the rule of law is not undermined. The qualitative data now substantiates the quantitative data has proven through the Mo Ibrahim Index of 2017.

Mutua (2016) postulates that the rule of law is regarded as a solution that will ensure a successful, fair, and modern democracy that will lead to sustainable development and reflect good governance. The rule of law is a part of good governance that makes sure that it comes to pass. The rule of law is an important feature of good governance because it ensures that there is the promotion of human rights, equality, and no discrimination in the process of seeking good governance. Mukua (2016: 2) says, 'Liberalism predates and gives birth to political democracy which in turn is universalised in human rights'. The common thread that runs through them is the rule of law.

The former liberation movements had to restructure themselves a good deal before achieving good governance. Both ZANU-PF and the ANC must practise the dynamics of good governance. The former liberation movements understood this before being the incumbents, and they fought the struggle to achieve this.

There has been a lack of political change in Zimbabwe because there has been only one kind of governance under one kind of leader over time. Therefore, to maintain that one kind of governance in power, Zimbabwe has a record of violence, especially during the electoral years because ZANU-PF was militant in reprimanding civil society. This always led to the international system snubbing Zimbabwe in international affairs through economic sanctions. The leadership changes in the ANC have been vital, not only for the organisation but for the State too. Even in a one-party dominated system, there is a change of democratic

leadership when the civil society constantly chooses who should represent them.

The change of leadership in the ANC shows the face of liberalism to an extent. With the constant change in the organisation comes the eventual change in the administration of the State's government. The transition into the democratic dispensation is not entirely a wrong turn, but the leadership crisis makes it seem like the system is not a guarantee for good governance. Good governance is a concept that is spearheaded by leaders of the State. Regardless of how liberal the system is, if the leaders are patrimonial in execution, the domino effect threatens the dynamics of good governance. This leads to the decay in development through many channels, such as corruption.

### **3.3. Government efficiency**

Government efficiency is crucial to this study because from the onset, the study enquires about the former liberation movements' ability to provide good governance, as political parties, in the democratic dispensation. Good governance would not be a good government without it being efficient. The efficiency of a government determines the goodness of its governance. The former liberation movements were self-tasked to emancipate their respective countries and people from colonialism and apartheid. Also, as has been explained, liberation movements have not been given the right platforms to integrate themselves with effective governance prospects. It is further argued that because the liberation movements lack studying governance as political parties, they are liable to have government inefficiency from time to time.

Carrick (1988) argues that a government is not an institution that is generally the producer of efficiency, yet it is an institution that comes about with ways and systems of incentives and controls to provide such efficiency. As political parties, ZANU-PF and the ANC have the authoritative complement to produce such good governance. In the modern global system, Olayele (2004) suggests that almost every democratic State has political parties. ZANU-PF and the ANC are ruling parties that have proven from their first years of democracy to be political parties who are sure to be sufficiently capacitated to occupy government and formulate and implement policies. This, ideally and according to international standards, would guarantee government efficiency and ultimately good governance (Kaufmann, Kraay & Mastruzzi 2008). The problem, however, seems

to be the implementation part of the policies.

However, it has been argued that ZANU-PF and the ANC have a similar problem of a leadership crisis which would lead to the inefficiency of the government. The literature concerning this aspect is so minimal in addressing how the former liberation movements' lack of progressive transition may have led to the poor leadership skills in government. Bad leadership comes bad governance by default, and with good leadership comes efficient and good governance. Olayele (2004) says, 'Any analysis of the Zimbabwe crisis will have to place at its centre, the critical role and extent to which political parties contribute to reversing the gains of democracy as political institutions with the aggregative function of assembling and promoting policy platforms for voters through internal party practices.'

In the year 2000, under former President Mugabe, ZANU-PF passed a referendum on land redistribution to compensate the people of Zimbabwe for the atrocities and injustices of the colonial era. ZANU-PF, in this case, did not see the threshold of causing government inefficiency because, in its authority, the party claimed it was acting rightly within the interests of the people and the State at large (Gumede 2018). At the time, the economy of Zimbabwe was declining. ZANU-PF's actions seemed to be accustomed to how a liberation movement would act on the land issue. The expropriation of white-owned land boosted the ZANU-PF's popularity among black people in Zimbabwe and instilled hatred towards white Zimbabweans. The lines were drawn in the liberation struggle regarding who your enemy and liberator were. ZANU-PF used this political communication method to draw lines between black and white Zimbabweans in the democratic dispensation that espoused inclusivity (Masunungure 2011).

ZANU-PF did not carefully consider the implications of its actions on the economy. Economies around the world are interrelated. Given this pragmatic nature, Zimbabwe was punished by the international community with economic sanctions in 2001 because of the land reform programmes. This positioned the Zimbabwean government in the State of inefficiency (Mararike 2018). As the incumbent political party and former liberation movement, ZANU-PF should have carefully contemplated acting in the interests of the economy then. Economic sanctions are political strategies used by the hegemonic powers of international relations to distribute and exact their power on smaller states like Zimbabwe that would not follow democratic governance channels (Addis 2001).

This is why the neo-colonialist strategy of sanctions was passed on Zimbabwe by the global community as international diplomacy (Masaka 2012: 54-56).

At the dawn of democracy in South Africa, the ANC as the ruling party made sure to amalgamate the State into a unitary Republic. The former liberation movement fought to have a diverse country where all people living in it would have the same opportunities and equal rights, as per the definition of democracy. The ANC played a role in assuring that the government spheres were also structured so that it would allow government efficiency to take place in South Africa.

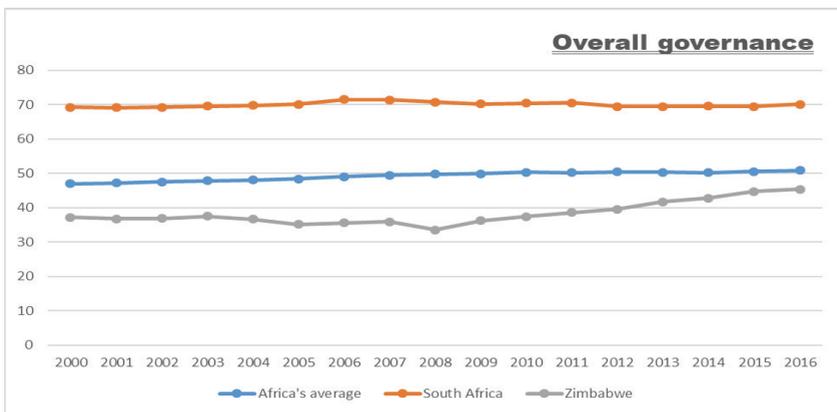
As the ruling party, the ANC is responsible for ensuring that government operates smoothly and justly. The ruling party must look after the governmental institutions and ensure that inefficiencies of patrimony do not tamper with the efficiency of the government. In this case, consistency in implementing domestic and foreign policies is vital and would guarantee good governance. However, this is likely not the case in South Africa, as it has been challenged to implement policies over the years since the democratic dispensation. This resulted in an economic decline which directly affected the country's development.

The ANC's leadership has proven to act less like a political party serving the interests of all South Africans but rather serving a few individuals who were part of the liberation struggle. Unfortunately, this kind of governance does not mean much for the integrity and efficiency of the government (Zondi 2019). Arguably, corruption in South Africa must be one of the instigators of government inefficiency. Corruptionwatch (2019), 'Corruption and international perceptions of corruption in South Africa has been damaging to the country's reputation and has created obstacles to local and foreign direct investment, flows to the stock market, global competitiveness, economic growth and has ultimately distorted the development and [the] upliftment of our people.'

The statement above shows that the efficiency of the South African government is under threat because of corruption. That kind of leadership shatters South Africa or Zimbabwe and any developing country that seeks to have good governance for development. To fulfil the statements above, in the new political landscape of South Africa, which entered post-1994, some ANC officials have done damage to the government by causing so much inefficiency that their defence comes from hiding behind the former liberation movement. The quote from former President Jacob Zuma that 'the ANC came before South

Africa' further proves that the former liberation movement still operates like that, only with the façade of a political party (Chigumadzi 2016). The statements above come together and conceptualise that those liberation movements turned political parties must respect their oath of office. In this way, they would also be legitimising themselves in international relations as anchors of democratic rule and abiding by constitutionalism; the Rule of Law and accountability indicators combined to deliver overall governance and efficiency.

**Figure 3: Overall governance**



**Source:** Mo Ibrahim Index 2017

The overall governance provided by ZANU-PF and the ANC is measured by the efficiency of other factors like Accountability and the Rule of Law. With these factors, incumbents like ZANU-PF and the ANC are propelled to perform exceptionally as Zimbabwe and South Africa governments, respectively. This leads to the government being efficient because service delivery, socio-political and economic development and other forms of development are sustained.

According to the graph above, from 2000 to 2009, most African states averaged about 40% in terms of overall governance (Ibrahim Index for African Governance 2017). From the year 2010 to 2016, the numbers for overall governance improved to 50% average for the rest of Africa. Considered a third-world continent, Africa

suffers from downgrading situations such as conflict, lack of development, weak economies, and political instabilities. These factors affect governance in a bad way, meaning that good governance is very low at percentages of 40% to 50%.

Zimbabwe under ZANU-PF averaged approximately 30% in overall governance performance from 2000 to 2012. During these times, Zimbabwe was on the path of expropriating land without compensation, which led to the political and economic instabilities that led the global community to put sanctions on the ZANU-PF-led government. These sanctions threatened the efficiency of the Zimbabwean political landscape and economic prosperity, which eventually provided for good governance via government efficiency (Mararike 2018). From 2013 to 2016, Zimbabwe averaged about 40% in overall governance because of the interventions that came from the global community because of violations that occurred due to the restructuring of the State.

The inefficiency of government in Zimbabwe was due to a series of incidents of electoral violence in the State. The electoral violence demines the factors of good governance such as Accountability and the Rule of Law. With these dynamics and factors not being upheld, governance is compromised to be as respectable and effective as it should be. During the struggle years, ZANU-PF fought for freedom so that these concepts were integrated into government; however, as a political party, ZANU-PF has mostly violated these factors, leading to inefficiency of governance.

Looking at South Africa under the ANC, the State's overall governance peaks higher than the rest of Africa and the Zimbabwean average. From 2000 to 2004, South Africa averaged about 60% in overall governance. Perhaps this could be because the State was still fresh in democracy and still finding its feet in governance. With issues of the past, South Africa needed to provide governance that would be versatile and diverse and includes all South Africans.

That is why from 2005 to 2010, South Africa improved on its average, being at the 70% level. Issues such as lack of service delivery, inequality, poverty, and other socioeconomic challenges deemed South Africa to fall back to the 60% average level from 2011 to 2016 because of the inefficiency of governance in the State. This leads to examining the failures and achievements of the ANC as the ruling party.

#### 4. Putting the findings into further context

The neo-patrimonial approach explains the plausible leadership crises under ZANU-PF and the ANC that unfold due to a lack of good governance. October (2015) postulates that the ANC has never considered itself a political party but is rather still challenged being a liberation movement. ZANU-PF's grip on power has the same relic of consequence in Zimbabwe. Consequently, this study postulates that the political parties still operate as liberation movements, which causes a deficit in the democratic processes and undermines the whole liberation struggle (October 2015). Liberation movements sought to enter a struggle fighting for democracy as a concept to a state's ideology.

In as much as the political landscape of both Zimbabwe and South Africa changed into a 'democratic' dispensation, ZANU-PF and the ANC did not follow the same relic of consequence. During colonial and apartheid rule in Zimbabwe and South Africa, black people's socioeconomic conditions were mainly in a dire situation that needed rapid intervention, which the former liberations movements provided. However, in their new political dispensation, socioeconomic conditions in both Zimbabwe and South Africa have not changed as the transition from oppression intended. Masenya (2017: 150-159) says, 'Historically, neopatrimonialism derives from the socioeconomic and political system established by colonialism and white minority rule, but it has also been a characteristic of African politics since independence.'

The quote above substantiates the reality in both Zimbabwe and South Africa. Chikwaza and Chikumbu (2021) further argue that neopatrimonialism in Zimbabwe has been institutionalised. This makes it impossible for good governance and democratic values of making a free choice during elections to prevail. In South Africa, voter turnout has been influenced by the population's socioeconomic status. The ANC often uses state resources to lure voters during elections to legitimise their reign. This is stated because most people living in South Africa are poverty-stricken, the economy keeps on declining with high unemployment rates, and there is a huge lack of accountability to those undermining good governance. Ultimately, this study finds that both ZANU-PF and the ANC, as political parties, hold the same relic of consequences of the oppressors they fought as liberation movements.

The transition from liberation movements into political parties was meant to

see democracy prevail. However, patrimonial governance prevails in both states causing informal institutions to run parallel to formal ones. From 2000 to 2016, the authoritarian rule and corruption in Zimbabwe and South Africa are the clandestine patron-client networks that undermine good governance to prevail (Francisco 2010). The neopatrimonialism theory thus sustains that Zimbabwe and South Africa under ZANU-PF and the ANC initiate informal institutions such as authoritarianism and corruption to exist alongside formal institutions legally recognised by the constitutions of both states.

There has been a lack of political change in Zimbabwe because there has been only one kind of governance under one kind of leader over time. Therefore, Zimbabwe has a record of violence, especially during the election years, because ZANU-PF was militant in reprimanding civil society. This has always led to the international community snubbing Zimbabwe in international affairs. The leadership changes in the ANC have been vital, not only for the organisation but for the State too. However, it has perpetuated a dominant one-party system in the South African political landscape. The study uses the evidence above to State that the transition these former liberation movements underwent leading to political parties did not guarantee good governance because of inconsistencies and contradictions in what was agreed upon during the transition and what is happening in governance after the transition. This further proves the notion that the distribution of resources that gives rise to clandestine patron-client networks is based on the interests of a political party in a state. Therefore, the authoritative regime and one-party dominance in Zimbabwe and South Africa have subjected this study to analysis based on what the paper stated above, specifically with the indicators of good governance.

## **5. Conclusion**

ZANU-PF and the ANC are both solid representations in history and the present day of what their respective states, Zimbabwe, and South Africa, went through during the colonial era. Both Zimbabwe and South Africa have a common past of being colonies of the British empire. Because of this, ZANU-PF and the ANC emerged as liberation movements to abolish the injustices that colonialism, imperialism, and apartheid inflicted on the people of both countries based on political, economic, and social authority.

Liberation movements like ZANU-PF and the ANC have inherited the chosen governments' responsibilities in their respective states (Clapham 2012: 11). ZANU-PF and the ANC have undergone rigorous and thorough negotiations to become political powers and assume government authority. The Lancaster House Agreement for ZANU-PF and the CODESA talks for the ANC were platforms for both organisations to transform and ultimately transition from liberation movements to political parties. The emerging political parties vowed to uphold the concept of democracy and its principles at the negotiations for the transition.

The new dawn of democratisation raised the responsibilities of these political parties to conform to governing, not just governing but to provide good governance. Based on the dynamics of good governance, one could measure whether a political party subscribed to good governance. The essence of using these dynamics of good governance was to examine and explore whether the transition of former liberation movements into political parties has led to good governance and the implications thereof.

This study concludes that the transition of former liberation movements into political parties has not led to good governance. This is based on the difference between the operations of a liberation movement and a political party. However, the study acknowledges that there have been aspects of good governance by both ZANU-PF and the ANC. This is based on the concept and the international standard of what democracy is and what it should be by the dynamics of good governance. Both ZANU-PF and the ANC have demonstrated good governance capabilities and execution to a certain extent. The study stands on its position that the transition did not lead to good governance due to the inconsistencies both ZANU-PF and the ANC have shown in governance.

Throughout the study pointed out the lack of containing the dynamics that are considered to provide good governance. The study research also found that this lack of containment is due to the leadership crises ZANU-PF and the ANC have had in their organisational structures. As incumbents, both ZANU-PF and the ANC have acted as liberation movements. It is still embedded in them that they are the rightful heirs to the government throne in their respective states. This organisational mentality causes some leadership crises because that shifts priorities from using the national resources for the organisation and not for the benefit of the State and its citizens. Therefore, the Neo-patrimonial theory was

used to define the study's theoretical framework.

Liberation movements did not emerge based on what government should be like but rather on what it should not be. At the formation of ZANU-PF and the ANC, the organisations emerged because the entity that governed the country before had oppressed, marginalised, discriminated against and isolated most of the society in the politics of the State. Therefore, the liberation movements sought to liberate and change the status quo, ultimately causing a revolution of ideas, bringing about the dawn of democracies in both states. Based on the arguments of this study, the study research also concludes that the transition of ZANU-PF and the ANC reflects inconsistencies in governance because the turning of these liberation movements into political parties did not focus on the fact that they intended to govern, but rather on liberating a society.

ZANU-PF and the ANC should act in the interests of their citizens in their respective states. As political parties who have pledged to ride on the democratisation wave, these two political parties should determine a strong leadership in their organisations so that there is no lack of capacity to provide good governance. This research recommends that ZANU-PF and the ANC start acting as political parties and not always consider themselves liberation movements. Both these organisations have indeed liberated their respective states; however, that struggle ended, and a new fight had begun against social, political, and economic development issues that most, if not all, African states face. Acting as political parties would suggest that the interests of the citizens are met by advancing these developmental issues, and the principles of democracy are intact. This would mean that the dynamics of good governance would improve in terms of accountability because there would be efficiency in government and respect for the rule of law.

Ultimately, respecting and executing the dynamics of good governance to the core as political parties, ZANU-PF, and the ANC can potentially escalate their respective states to the status of developed states. With this being the case, the sovereignty of both states would strengthen in the international system, and the voice of Africa as a continent would be respected and recognised because of the efficiency in government and respect for democratic principles. This would lead to self-reliance for both states. Lastly, as political parties, the former liberation movements should prioritise formulating and implementing progressive policies for their respective countries because that results in direct

and foreign investments. Investments are crucial for any country's development and economic growth, which helps curb unemployment, poverty, and crime, which are huge concerns for both states. All these need a rigorous and thorough strict persistence on the dynamics of good governance mentioned above in the study.

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# A Rhetoric or Genuine Transformation? An Afro-Decolonial analysis of Democratic Alliance Economic Justice Policy

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## Abstract

The post-apartheid African National Congress-led government adopted several affirmative actions to dismantle the colonial-apartheid sponsored racial inequality manifested by excluding black people in the country's socioeconomic and political developments. Equally, the emergence of black people in the Democratic Alliance leadership positions saw race as a basis to argue against persisting inequality between the majority of black South Africans and their white counterparts. This occasioned a heated debate within the party between white and black leaders, with the former refuting the use of race in policymaking to address the challenges faced by South Africa. Consequently, most black leaders left the party so that academics and media regard them as being pushed by their white counterparts inside the party, who oppose a shift from conservative to transformative policies. In recent times, the Democratic Alliance has adopted an Economic Justice Policy that excluded race to address inequality, poverty, and unemployment. This desktop article employs the Afro-Decolonial perspective as an alternative lens to interrogate whether the Democratic Alliance Economic Justice Policy manifests that the organisation is committed to transformation or the latter is just rhetoric. Methodologically, Afrocentric qualitative research relied heavily on secondary data and adopted document analysis.

**Keywords:** Afro-Decolonial, South Africa, Democratic Alliance, Transformation, Rhetoric, Genuine

## 1. Introduction

The post-1994 South African government acknowledged that democratic transition would be worthless if the colonial-apartheid economic mainstream remained intact. The new government underscores that political freedom must coincide with the economic freedom for most of the South African population, particularly Africans, to strengthen the new democracy. The government adopted affirmative action to transform the colonial-apartheid economic structure, among other measures. For those opposing affirmative action, the principle of non-racialism, access to equal opportunities, and merit are used to demonstrate the drawbacks of such policies. On the other hand, proponents employ the remnants of racism, injustice, and inequality as a justification for adopting and implementing such policies (Andrews 1999). For the African National Congress (ANC), democracy, national liberation, and non-racialism are intertwined. The ANC also believes that democracy should bring about national liberation by disentangling previously oppressed and disadvantaged population groups such as Africans, Coloureds and Indians. The envisaged national liberation is the central aim of the ANC articulated by the National Democratic Revolution as part of freeing black people from political and economic bondage. Thus, for the ANC, the political transition should be accompanied by economic transformation (Anciano 2014). The ANC-led government adopted affirmative action measures such as the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment of 2003 and the Employment Equity Act of 1998 to dismantle the colonial-apartheid sponsored racial inequality manifested by the exclusion of black people in the country's socio-economic developments.

Equally, the emergence of black people in the Democratic Alliance leadership positions saw race as a basis to argue against persisting inequality between the majority of black South Africans and their white counterparts. This occasioned a heated debate within the party between white and black leaders, with the former refuting the use of race in policymaking to address the challenges faced by South Africa. Consequently, most black leaders left the party so that academics and media regard them as being pushed by their white counterparts inside the party, who oppose a shift from conservative to transformative policies. In recent times, the Democratic Alliance has adopted an Economic Justice Policy that excluded race to address inequality, poverty, and unemployment. This

desktop article employs the Afro-Decolonial perspective as an alternative lens to interrogate whether Democratic Alliance Economic Justice Policy manifests that the organisation is committed to transformation or the latter is just rhetoric. Methodologically, Afrocentric qualitative research relied heavily on secondary data and adopted document analysis. This paper is divided into five sections. The first part of the paper expounds on the Afro-Decolonial lens of analysis as an alternative perspective to analyse the Democratic Alliance Economic Justice Policy. This is followed by the history and analysis of South Africa's major Transformative Affirmative Action Policies. The third section analyses the Democratic Alliance Economic Justice Policy. The subsequent section answers a question as to whether the said policy manifests that the organisation is committed to transformation or the latter is just rhetoric in the Democratic Alliance. The last part of the article provides a conclusion.

## **2. Afro-Decolonial lens of analysis**

Afro-Decolonial lens refers to theoretical principles that emanate from decoloniality and Afrocentricity, which analyses African phenomenon or communities from their position to dismantle perpetual epistemic dislocation committed by Euro-American theories. In this regard, the Afro-Decolonial lens shifts the locus of reason from a Eurocentric perspective, wherein African phenomena or communities are studied and understood outside. It entails the epistemic rejection towards Eurocentric mainstream theories imposed on Africans ranging from Realism which represents the right-wing, and Marxism of the left. It positions Africans epistemically to think based on their experience as the locus of reasoning, studying, and understanding African phenomenon. Epistemic rebellion prevailed in all countries of the South across the world, but a variety of contexts necessitates the contextualisation of the rebellion. In this article, the Afro-Decolonial lens negates conventions, sequence, logic, and theories imposed by Europeans on Africans. In other words, the lens is deployed by marginalised African decolonial thinkers to dismantle the ontological crisis brought by Euro-American coloniality by repositioning African ontological claims to their epistemic locus. Included here is the unveiling of injustice brought by Eurocentrism, by reconceptualising and relooking at explanations brought by Eurocentrism, and coming up with new ways of analysis and discourses. Thus,

through the Afro-Decolonial lens, the researcher will attain epistemic, cognitive, and hermeneutic justice by unmasking injustice embedded in the coloniality of being, power, and knowledge brought by Euro-Americans. The researcher will also unmask other aspects of African dislocation in the socioeconomic realm and propose remedies to attain the relocation of Africa and her people to the centre of the globe (Zondi 2019).

Unlike studies undertaken from a Euro-American perspective, the analysis and understanding of a phenomenon under study are situated to the experience of the South, South Africa in this case. As a decolonial discourse challenging epistemic injustice, the study breaks away from the Eurocentric claim of universality, neutrality, and single truth, by locating the analysis to South Africa, which strives for inclusive development to address challenges brought by the colonial-apartheid government. The said Eurocentric posture is challenged by providing an Afro-Decolonial analysis of the Democratic Alliance Economic Justice Policy. This should be understood within the context that individual arguments are informed by their positionality to a certain class, sexuality, gender, spirituality, linguistic, a locus on the globe, and race in the contemporary world (Grosfoguel 2010). Unlike those undertaken from a Euro-American perspective, the study does not hide or delink the researcher from the analysis. Thus, the researcher's positionality as African in South Africa is not delinked from the subject of study.

### **3. South Africa's Transformative Affirmative Action Policies**

As part of its endeavour to democratise and deracialise the economy, ANC adopted major policies such as the Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998 and Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment in 2003 (Mosala, Venter, and Bain 2017; Andrews 1999). The 1998 Employment Equity Act seeks to attain equality in the working environment by advocating for equal opportunities and fair treatment of people by eliminating unfair discrimination. More importantly, the Act seeks to promote equality by executing affirmative action measures to redress the unfair discrimination suffered by previously disadvantaged people. This is done to grow their equal representation in occupational categories and levels in the working environment (Alexander 2006; Hoog, Siebers and Linde 2010). The beneficiaries of the Act are black people (including Coloured and Indians),

women of all races, and people living with disabilities (Dupper 2008).

Arguing on the same issue, Ratuva (2006) states that affirmative action was meant to address the economic exclusion of black people to attain equality and justice as stipulated in the 1996 Constitution. The Act came into effect in 1999 to promote access to equal opportunities for previously disadvantaged, with blacks being given precedence in the labour market. Section 55 (1) of that Act outlaws' discrimination in employment based on race, gender, sex, pregnancy, orientation, age, disability, religion, political opinion, culture, language, and birth. Included here is the elevation of black people in managerial positions to develop skills and establish their own business. The Act transformed the apartheid racially driven working environment into a democratised one based on equality of workers irrespective of race. To make this a reality, an employment audit was brought into place to regulate the profile of the workforce report published by employers. This entails adopting an employment plan by employers in deliberations with the workforce to demonstrate the envisaged target to attain equality in the workplace for one to five years. Thus, to enforce employment equity, companies were mandated to submit their plan to the government for monitoring, and companies also provided regular reports, and reasonable penalties were imposed for those violating the provisions. The central aim of this Act is to advance equality and fair treatment in the working environment by eliminating any forms of unfair discrimination. It also seeks to undertake affirmative action measures to address the challenges faced by formerly disadvantaged groups to ensure their equal representation in various occupational categories and levels in the working environment.

Equally, Filatova (2011) argues that policies adopted included the White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service of 1997 and the Employment Equity Act of 1998, which advocate for racial transformation. The Employment Equity Act seeks to promote equal representation in all occupational categories and levels in the working environment through affirmative action measures that address the difficulties faced by previously disadvantaged groups. The Act calls for equal representation in state organisations, institutions, and the private sector. The Act called on employers to submit employment equity plans which project their observance of the affirmative action goals each year and give reports on how the plans will be implemented. Only the National Defence Force, the National Intelligence Agency, and the South African Security Services were

exempted from implementing the Act.

As indicated earlier, Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment is one of the affirmative transformative policies adopted by the post-apartheid government. Elibiary (2010) underscores that the ANC regards the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment as a policy adopted to address the injustices brought by apartheid by transforming the South African economy to represent the country's demographic configuration. Beyond that, the policy seeks to address racial inequality and discrimination which predated apartheid. This should be viewed from an angle that racial inequality and discrimination were long brought by colonialism before segregation could be formalised with the adoption of the Apartheid policy in 1948 (Durrheim, Dixon, Tredoux, Eaton, Quayle, and Clack 2008). To actualise the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment, beneficiaries are empowered directly through owning and controlling enterprises, including certain assets. They are also afforded positions at the level of senior management. Indirect empowerment through preferential procurement, enterprise development, and corporate social investment is included here. The Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment was anticipated to reduce inequality, poverty, unemployment and grow the South African economy. Thus, the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment was viewed as a remedy to triple challenges (inequality, unemployment, and poverty) facing South Africa (Elibiary 2010). Filatova (2011) echoes the same sentiment that the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment was adopted to develop black-owned businesses and employment among black people. The Act requires companies doing business with the state to give some shares to black people, managerial positions, and procure goods from black-owned businesses.

By 2010 there was no indication that the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment attains its aims and objectives, as South Africa remained an unequal nation, the unemployment rate persists, and the economy grew at a slower rate. Elibiary (2010) stated that the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment yielded unintended consequences that curbed the economic growth and worsened the country's condition. Among other things, high transactional and compliance costs have affected innovation, and business development as preoccupation with compliance shifted a focus away from sustainable job creation and development. As a result, the South African market becomes unattractive to investment. Elibiary recommends that the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment could be

achieved through a policy that focuses largely on education, training, and skills development and a conducive environment to grow business and attract foreign direct investment. The criticism also comes from the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) over crony capitalism, nepotism, and costs of doing business caused by the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment. The policy enriched the few elites affiliated with the ANC, thus empowering black people. Moeletsi Mbeki, drawn by Elibiary (2010: 21), advances that the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment ‘undermines the ANC’s longstanding policy of non-racialism and perpetuates a sense of victimhood’.

Mosala, Venter, and Bain (2017) remark that the highly-rated Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment has brought in the cadre deployment strategy and largely failed to redistribute the wealth to the majority of previously disadvantaged black South Africans enriching few elites. Inferring from this, Mosala et al. (2017) postulate that the ANC has restored the colonial economy through Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment by pursuing de-racialisation policies that promote inequality, poverty, unemployment, racism, and dispossession. This policy has replaced the envisaged transformation with a reformist programme of the national elite. Equally, Filatova (2011) postulates that the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment has yielded few billionaires and exacerbated corruption and failed to change the lives of envisaged historically disadvantaged people. The policy has failed to produce well-educated, skilled, entrepreneurial, and experienced black middle-class but has instead promoted ill-prepared and under-qualified middle-class who exploit their proximity to government promoting racial distribution.

The adoption and execution of affirmative action policies in the private and public sectors are meant to prepare black managers and fill the previously reserved positions for their white counterparts. Adam (1997) indicates that white people held 85% to 95% of senior management and other key government posts in the past. This has spurred calls for the training of the excluded and underrepresented groups to be included on boards and other governing bodies. Drawn by Adam (1997: 240), Nelson Mandela describes affirmative action as ‘corrective action to bring previously disadvantaged people to the same competitive levels as those who have been advantaged’.

Affirmative Action has been labelled as perpetuating racial identities of the past and racism instead of using class as a guiding lens to address inequality. The

inclusion of all blacks as eligible beneficiaries leads to the exclusion of most black people to benefit from the redistribution. However, the use of race in addressing the South African triple challenges (inequality, poverty, and unemployment) cannot be overlooked given that racial groups were brought forth by racial discrimination of the past, which disadvantaged non-whites (Dupper 2008). Ratuva (2006) views the transformation policies as pro-black affirmative action measures meant to redress apartheid pro-white affirmative action policies which legalise the exclusion of black people. These policies were meant to empower blacks to advance their economic, educational, cultural, and political conditions. In other words, they were adopted to address the difficulties faced by black people in employment, income, poverty, and education. Scholars like Madona Mbatha, as cited by Ratuva (2006), articulates that restoring racism as competence is not based on colour but one's skills. Thus, Mbatha recommends that competition should take precedence to level the playing field.

The ANC, cited by Anciano (2014), states that the apartheid institutionalised racial hierarchy should be eradicated by empowering black people, especially Africans, through a radical transformation of key sectors of the economy. Non-racialism should coexist with self-emancipation by black people, wherein Africans preside over their liberation. In essence, non-racialism should be contextualised within the historical injustice wherein black people, especially Africans, face the apartheid exclusionary socioeconomic structure. Cronin (2011), drawn by Anciano (2014: 40), avers that 'You can't build a sustainable non-racial society in which unemployment, inequality, and poverty are still profoundly skewed by a racialised past. You can't hope for enduring non-racialism when material realities...continue to reproduce the same racialised advantages and disadvantages'. For Cronin (2011), if the system caused the crime, building a non-racial South Africa requires a 'transformation of the material conditions themselves'.

The ANC formulated affirmative action policies with an awareness and intention to deracialise the economy and open job opportunities to the previously disadvantaged. Inferring from this, it could be argued that affirmative action policies are meant to bring conditions in which such policies will no longer be needed. This suggests that racial classification cannot be ignored in post-apartheid if there is a quest for equality in society. Thus, ANC views the transformation of apartheid socio-economic legacy as a precondition to attaining

non-racialism (Anciano 2014).

Despite the Constitutional provision of equality, the ANC transformation policies redress the past discrimination by disadvantaging the previously advantaged groups. The setbacks of the Employment Equity Act are that job allocation is largely driven by race, which suggests that the majority of qualified whites are being excluded. Moreover, the issue of the class or social position of black people is overlooked, thus disadvantaging those who live in poverty (Stacey 2003). While the Provision of equality is used to counter the adoption and implementation of affirmative action, Section 9 of that principle underscores that equality entails outright and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To advance equality, legislative and other measures may be carried out to protect and promote groups disadvantaged by unfair discrimination. Equally, Section 195 of Chapter 10 of the South African Constitution on Public Administration states that 'Public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation'.

However, Vincent Maphai, cited by (Adam 1997: 243), views the inclusion of affirmative action in the South African Constitution as a basis to legalise discriminatory legislation and replicate the apartheid use of state resources to promote certain groups while disadvantaging others. On the other hand, Adam (1997) echoes the same sentiment that the use of race as a basis for affirmative action overlooks the fact that some blacks do not largely need affirmative action policies but can secure such benefits. Thus race-based focus enables the already privileged black because it overlooks class differences. In other words, apartheid has oppressed and disadvantaged all blacks, but they were not equally affected.

In the context of Afro-Decolonial analysis, the post-apartheid government adopted race-based affirmative action policies to relocate black people, women of all races, and people living with disabilities from the margins at the working environment in both public and private sector. Specifically, such policies were adopted to relocate the majority of Africans, which were largely disadvantaged and dislocated to the margins of the mainstream economy and their national wealth. However, such policies are undercut by cadre deployment strategy, exclusion of class amongst Africans in their implementation, and corruption. To remedy this, the ANC should prioritise class, competence, and skills to

implement such policies.

#### **4. Democratic Alliance Economic Justice Policy**

Before adopting the Economic Justice Policy, Democratic Alliance has been very critical of the ANC race-based policies. On this one, Mottiar (2015) argues that the 2014 election poster for the organisation was labelled as insulting to black people. The scathing was spurred by the sentiments projected by the poster as saying, ‘We support BEE that creates jobs, not billionaires’ was deemed insulting to black people and, it was argued, suggests that the DA would prefer to see black South Africans as ‘labour, not as owners of the means of production’ (Hlongwane 2013 cited by Mottiar 2015). Mottiar (2015) argues further that the Democratic Alliance approach on policies that impact the majority of voters it seeks to draw is confusing and contributes to its lower support base. A case in point is the Democratic Alliance backtracks on the vote is cast in favour of the Employment Equity Amendment Bill tabled before parliament in 2013. In her words, Helen Zille justified the withdrawal of their vote cast in October 2013, describing the Bill in a newsletter titled ‘A plane crash that should have been avoided’, Zille said the turnabout was due to the party ‘dropping the ball’. She explained that the DA could not support legislation that ‘is based on racial coercion [and that] will undermine growth, reduce jobs, drive away investment and work against black empowerment’ (Zille 2013 cited by Mottiar 2015: 113-114). Cited by Mnikati (2020: 90) in another case, Zille argues that ‘we must challenge the idea that blackness is a proxy for disadvantage when it enables this fig leaf for corruption and the kind of mess we are seeing in the state-owned enterprises’.

It is worth noting that there is a divergence view within Democratic Alliance over race-based policies. In agreement, Mnikati (2020) underscores that one of the recurring problems in the Democratic Alliance policy position is the divergence over the use of race among party members. For example, other members view the use of policies as Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment as necessary and responsive to the contemporary developments of post-apartheid South Africa, while others regard such policies as dispensable. The 2013 developments sparked disagreement between Zille and the former party’s parliamentary leader, Lindiwe Mazibuko, who called for a strong stance on the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment and other affirmative action policies. Equally, other

Democratic Alliance black leaders raised discontent over the party's stance on affirmative action and labelled that as confusing to voters as affirmative action is largely important to black electorates targeted by the organisation (Mottiar 2015). Arguing in favour of affirmative action policies, Gana (2019), as drawn by Mnikati (2020: 93), underscores that apartheid was unjust practice favouring white people over their black counterparts. This development necessitates the adoption of race-driven policies to undo such historical injustice. Thus, for Gana (2019), Democratic Alliance is not a party for all South Africans.

In recent times, Democratic Alliance adopted the Economic Justice policy, which excluded race as a basis for policymaking and implementation. For Democratic Alliance, the legacy of apartheid economic exclusion should be addressed so that South Africans will be disentangled from the past racial classification. People continue to benefit from existing policies, especially when the policies do not transform from one racial category to another after being empowered. Despite this, the current policies are projected by the government as suitable measures to redress the economic legacy of apartheid. On Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment, Democratic Alliance believes that this policy focuses largely on the ownership and management of companies instead of the contribution made by the private sector. Moreover, political affiliation takes precedence in the transformation of senior executive leaders of companies rather than advancing education to increase people's access to highly skilled jobs (DA 2020).

In agreement, Nicolson (2020) argues that the Democratic Alliance Policy Conference rejected the use of race in their policies as a basis to identify and uplift the previously disadvantaged people, black people in this case. Among others, the party called for the replacement of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment and other policies centred on race and gender with measures acknowledging the contribution made by companies to meet Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through the proposed policy, the requirement of black ownership will be abolished, and procurement in the state will prioritise competent companies and contribute to SDGs. Equally, Davis (2020) and Ndenze (2020) aver that the Democratic Alliance Economic Justice Policy advocates discarding race-based empowerment policies. The said Economic Justice Policy urged the removal of Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment and other race-based and gender-based policies with a policy that assesses the contribution

made by the business sector on SDGs.

Nicolson (2020) is very critical against the Democratic Alliance SDGs for focusing on the business sector to develop and transform society. Nicolson argues that these companies have benefited from apartheid injustice, and their operation is not in keeping with the transformation set by the post-apartheid government as they promote the exploitation of workers, communities, and the environment.

Among others, Democratic Alliance rejects the expropriation of land with a compensation bill. For DA, any property loss should be accompanied by fair compensation to avoid encroaching private property rights. Further, state-owned land should be redistributed to build houses for the poor. In cases where there is a need to employ private property (land), land should be expropriated with compensation below the market value (DA 2020). Expressing the same sentiment on the expropriation of land without compensation, Mnikati (2020) underscores that Democratic Alliance regards the Bill as a major threat to the Constitution and the banking sector. On labour-related issues, the Democratic Alliance advocates for introducing the Job Seekers Exemption Certificate (JSEC) for long-term unemployed South Africans to be exempted from the minimum wage bill and take a job of any wage. Equally, employers can apply for the same exemption from the minimum wage bill (DA 2020). On the other hand, Mnikati (2020) postulates that the JSEC cannot be a viable option for a country with a history of exploiting cheap labour, such as South Africa.

However, the discard of race in the Democratic Alliance could be described as an attempt to regain the support the party has lost to the Freedom Front Plus. In agreement, Mnikati (2020) argues that replacing non-racialism with identity politics has increased the support of Freedom Front Plus in recent elections. This is so because the shift provided a comfort zone for disillusioned voters who have supported Democratic Alliance. In other words, Helen Zille's ascendancy to the Democratic Alliance Federal Chair brought a policy shift within the organisation to regain the support lost by the party to the Freedom Front Plus.

Further, her election to the highest office was followed by the resignation of leaders deemed to be proponents of race-based policies. Mnikati captures this very well when he argues that Helen Zille's election sparked the resignation of former party Johannesburg Mayor Herman Mashaba and the national leader, Mmusi Maimane. Mashaba, cited in Mnikati (2020: 74), indicates that 'the election of

Helen Zille is a victory for people who stand diametrically against my belief systems'. On the other hand, Mmusi avers that 'the DA was not the vehicle best suited to take forward the vision of building "One SA for All"'. Inferring from the preceding arguments, one can argue that Maimane and Mashaba's arguments suggest that Zille's election meant the party shifted towards conservative liberalism, which put white interests first.

Equally, after he was elected, the interim organisation leader, John Steenhuisen, called for adopting a redress policy in which its success is not measured based on race. For Steenhuisen, race should be discarded, favouring redress policies that focused on black people who formed the majority of the poorest in the country. The existing race-based policies worsened the conditions of poor South Africans, and their wealthy counterparts became wealthier (Mnikati 2020).

## **5. A Rhetoric or Genuine Transformation?**

Leaning on coloniality, as explained by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013), this section answers a question as to whether the Democratic Alliance Economic Justice Policy represents the organisation stance to transformation, or the latter is rhetoric in the organisation. Ndlovu-Gatsheni attributes African challenges to coloniality which sustains colonial power patterns characterised by Western control, domination, and exploitation of countries of the South.

Inferring to the Economic Justice Policy, it is safe to argue that the Democratic Alliance is not committed to transformation, and the latter is rhetoric to the party. With this policy stance, the Democratic Alliance promotes the reforms advocated by coloniality instead of the transformation called decoloniality. By reforms, the author refers to a few changes that left the economic mainstream intact, such as equal rights instead of transformation, which seeks outright change in the mainstream economy. This is corroborated by the party stance against the expropriation of land without compensation and the use of Section 25 of the Constitution to override the expropriation bill. This should be understood within the context that the 1996 Constitution forms part of colonial reforms measures undertaken by colonisers to ensure that the stolen land remains the private property of whites, while blacks languish at the margins as landless. Maldonado-Torres (2016) and Mpofu (2017) argue that under coloniality, expropriation is carried out with the pretext of developing the market through

trade and investment. This replicates colonial practices as people continue to experience dispossession even under the new administration. In the context of the Democratic Alliance Economic Justice Policy, expropriation of land without compensation is frustrated with threats that will drive investors away; thus, the party promotes the perpetual landless state of the majority of black people and uses the 1996 colonial reformist Constitution to guise its agenda.

Ntsebeza (2007) advances that the property clause in the South African Constitution protects the expropriation of land without compensation taken illegally by whites during colonialism and apartheid. Through the Natives Land Act of 1913, white colonisers institutionalised the dispossession of more than 90% of the land from indigenous people in South Africa. The indigenous people shifted from successful farmers to labourers in the mines and farms emanated from dispossessed land. The Democratic Alliance Economic Justice Policy on the land issue could be described as an anti-decolonial stance undertaken by the party to frustrate transformative initiative which seeks to dismantle the colonial-apartheid racial classification and hierarchy in accessing the resources. This should be understood within the context that human beings are classified and hierarchised based on race under coloniality, which determines their access to the resources as stipulated by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013). Racial classification and hierarchisation have led to African people's relegation to the margins as objects of development (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2012). Thus, the Democratic Alliance Economic Justice Policy promotes and sustains blacks' use as objects of development to their white counterparts. This development is not different from black elites who benefit from the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment affirmative action at the expense of most of their black counterparts languishing at the margins of national wealth as victims of exploitative practices such as lower wages. The introduction of initiatives such as JSEC demonstrates that the Democratic Alliance policy posture is largely skewed to promote and preserve whites' interests. Apart from being delinked from South African history, as Mnikati (2020) mentioned, the Democratic Alliance proposed JSEC suggests that unemployed black people should strive to secure jobs and care about a decent wage. This policy implies that poverty will grow as remuneration will be consumed by basic needs. Given the above, the Democratic Alliance Economic Justice Policy sustains dual oppression instead of pushing for the implementation of transformative affirmative action policies to eligible beneficiaries and dismantling the exploitation of such

policies by some black political affiliates elites, their families, and allies.

Biko, cited by More (2004: 93), defines black as those who were politically, economically, and socially discriminated against through legislation in South Africa and thus united to disentangle themselves from oppression. Non-racialism that overlooks or negates the existence of race is in a way recognising its existence. Moreover, denialism against the existence of race suggests that there is unity and sameness of humanity. In other words, the people in question are united with society being equal and enjoying the same privileges and benefits. Drawing the Democratic Alliance Economic Justice Policy in the South African context, the policy could be referred to as denialism as the condition of black people cannot be addressed without acknowledging race as a basis for inequality, unemployment, and poverty in the country. While not all black people were equally disadvantaged, race cannot be overlooked in addressing the South African challenges. Maimane, drawn by Moloko (2020), underscores that the use of race does not make one racist and black people remain systematically excluded.

The European diaspora in Africa is used to frustrate any attempt of decolonisation as they did not encounter colonisation. This should be understood within the context that the Western diaspora benefitted from colonialism and apartheid. In this regard, coloniality sustains their ill-gotten wealth while decoloniality threatens that, including racial hierarchy, which projects them as superior beings at the apex, while black people languish at the margins (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2016). In the context of the Democratic Alliance Economic Justice Policy, the said policy is a strive by white conservatives within the party to frustrate policies that are meant to redistribute the ill-gotten property of their white voters. Gumede (2014) captures this very well when he states that for most ANC supporters and members, the Democratic Alliance is viewed as a white-dominant party with white interests at heart and overlooking economic inequality faced by the majority of previously disadvantaged black people.

## 6. Conclusion

This article adds to the academic discourse on South Africa's economic development and growth policies by using the Afro-Decolonial lens as an alternative perspective to analyse Democratic Alliance Economic Justice Policy. Specifically, the article seeks to determine whether the policy manifests the organisation com-

mitment to transformation or the latter is rhetoric within the party. It established that the said policy contributes to the colonial practice of promoting reform policies while frustrating transformative policies which seek to decolonise South Africa's economic mainstream. Thus, the party policy stance on transformation is rhetoric to guise its conservative approach. While the ANC affirmative action policies have been undercut by corruption, cadre deployment strategy, and class exclusion in their implementation, race cannot be ignored in addressing South Africa's triple challenges. This is so because unemployment, inequality, and poverty remain skewed favouring race.

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# Impact of Institutional Quality and Governance on Financial Inclusion for Women in South Africa: A Case of Gauteng Women Entrepreneurs

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## Abstract

This paper describes a study of South Africans' national perception and alignment to financial inclusion for women. It explains the impact of institutional roles and governance on financial inclusion in South Africa. There is ample evidence of government efforts on implementing financial inclusion in the country. Still, the significance of how governance and institutions promote access to finance for women has been overlooked in the literature. The main objective of this study is to identify the impact of institutional quality and governance on financial inclusion for women in South Africa. Data for analytical purposes supporting the research has been obtained from primary sources through semi-structured open-ended interviews collected from 2019 to 2020. The research approach employed and coded data from a recent study on 30 women entrepreneurs, five key policymakers on women empowerment and five financial institutions supervisors on financial inclusion for women. The results obtained suggest that there is little institutional quality and governance on financial inclusion for women, and further efforts must be intensified to achieve equal access to financial services in South Africa. Furthermore, the paper presents recommendations for policymakers that, if implemented, would prove fruitful. Policymakers are expected to facilitate gender-mainstreaming/strategies and working policies, monitoring and evaluation, financial literacy, and transparent legal framework on financial policies addressing women.

**Keywords:** Financial Inclusion, Political Economy, Racial Configuration of the Economy, Class Dimension, Women's Power

## 1. Introduction

Since women play diverse roles in the economy (economic actors, wives, mothers, entrepreneurs, workers, leaders), there are multiple benefits that women's financial inclusion add to society. Access to finance for women allows them to have long-term prosperity and financial security in their homes, health, children's education, and to be active players in their communities (Financial Inclusion Strategy Peer Learning Group (FISPLG) 2017: 4). However, the South African government and financial institutions such as Capitec, FNB, Standard Bank, not to mention a few, have not yet taken into consideration the integration of women's access to finance as an effective strategy for women's empowerment (Nanziri 2016; Wentzel, Diatha & Yadavalli 2016). Despite the legislation and constitution supporting equal access to human rights and the goal of the National Development Plan (NDP) to eliminate poverty and inequality by 2030, these measures do not include an explicit provision for women's gendered roles and practices as part of the redistribution of resources and economic growth (Gumede 2017; Habib 2013). The NDP ignores women's contributions to the economy in terms of addressing financial, social, cultural, religious, and educational barriers to women entering the job market, expansion of social infrastructure to reduce women's unemployment, and providing tenure for women farmers, to mention a few (Gumede 2016; Habib 2013). The report released by the South African Department of Women's Affairs in 2015 stated that 72% of women still live below the poverty line since working women in South Africa earn less than their male counterparts (Department of Women 2015: 115).

Currently, women continue to be subjected to abject poverty, inequality, and insecurity despite financial services and policies on women's empowerment. The reasons for this may lie in a sound analysis of financial inclusion as a tool of women's empowerment and how this has worked or not worked so far. It has been shown that this may impact the whole of society (O'Manique & Fourie 2016: 106). However, the extent to which South African women's financial illiteracy affects the levels of awareness on financial services (savings and investments) to create a sustainable environment for female entrepreneurs is yet to be thoroughly analysed.

The paper describes a study of South Africans' national perception and alignment to financial inclusion for women. It explains the impact of

institutional roles and governance on financial inclusion in South Africa. The main objective of this study is to identify the research gap relating to financial inclusion for women in South Africa. Data for analytical purposes supporting the research has been obtained from primary sources through semi-structured open-ended interviews collected through 2019-2020. The paper is divided into three sections; the first section presents a background on the government policies and initiatives before presenting the findings from the field research. The second section presents the study's methodology, and the last part presents the results, discussions, conclusion, and recommendation of the study.

## **2. Institutional Quality and Governance on Financial Inclusion for Women in South Africa.**

The South African government developed strategies to implement inclusive innovation in the financial sector, which is expected to occur within the political environment facilitating change within the physical and human capital context (Phiri et al. 2016: 123). The strategies developed are termed 'social policies', defined as the public-state collaboration in achieving and protecting the interest of the citizens within its region (Phiri et al. 2016: 123). The social policies endorsed by the state for innovative inclusion include education and training, employment, and creation of jobs, giving grants to alleviate poverty, improving science and technology within the institutions, developing proper structures within the levels of government. Through the Reserve Bank, the government regulates all the commercial banks in South Africa. The South African Reserve Bank (SARB) was established in 1921 in terms of the particular Act of parliament, the currency and banking Act (Act No. 31 of 1920) (SARB 2018: 8). Over the years, the bank went through several changes of monetary regimes, economic crashes and political upheaval. SARB is regulated and monitored in terms of the South African Constitution of RSA 1996, as it enjoys the degree of autonomy while executing its duties. The bank publishes a monthly report of its assets and liabilities while submitting its annual report to the parliament (SARB 2018: 8). Part of the policy endorsed by the SARB is the monetary policy which aims in achieving and maintaining price stability for a developed economy by achieving growth and sustainability. If price is unstable, it affects the economic growth and limits the employment rate, inflation, poverty and uncertainty within the

economy (SARB 2015). However, with the help of SARB, price is monitored and regulated and promotes low inflation which protects the poor and disadvantaged in the society from the fluctuating price rates (SARB 2015). Despite these efforts, the monetary policy initiated by SARB does not affect financial inclusion for women.

According to a Monetary Policy review released by the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) in October 2018, South Africa's inflation numbers are rising than expected due to exchange rate and oil price shocks in the Economy (SARB 2018: 8). However, economic growth is subdued due to structural issues beyond the reach of monetary policy and presents some confidence related demand weakness (SARB 2018: 8). This is because of structural inequalities prominent within South Africa's economy. Therefore, the fiscal policies dictate each economy's primary outcomes and influence gender equality in general (Stotsky et al. 2016: 8). The importance of relating fiscal policy to the study is that it addresses economic growth and financial inclusion for women also addresses economic growth. Therefore, the two concepts are entwined in each other, on the part of fiscal policy, it influences budget stability and sustainability on people. It determines the composition of total expenditure and revenues (Stotsky et al. 2016: 8). This facilitates human and physical accumulation, which promotes the incentives to work, invest and take risks, among other factors which increase economic growth (Stotsky et al. 2016: 8).

Furthermore, the report submitted to the South African parliament (RSA 2017b: 13) recognised that most South African women still occupy a lower percentage in the workforce than their male counterparts. Therefore, appropriate measures have been given to women to empower them fully and benefit from democratic reforms. Part of the reasons may be patriarchy in social norms, discriminatory practices, and persistent stereotypes that continue to dominate South African society, just like other African countries (Mushonga & Seloma 2018). These practices leave every average woman and girl in South Africa vulnerable and disadvantaged in unequal access to opportunities, resources, and power (Struckmann 2018: 35). All state leaders need to note that women's political and socio-economic empowerment are interwoven and mutually dependent on the country's development. The South African government committed themselves as signatories of global and regional treaties and agreements regarding women's economic empowerment and equality.

Examples of international treaties include the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 1979, Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), the African Union Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004), not to mention a few (RSA 2017c: 15).

Furthermore, the Southern African Development Community Protocol on Gender and Development in 2008 was signed by the South African government. The treaty requires the government to implement policies and enact laws on equal access for women in the formal and informal sectors. It further encourages states to review their natural trade and entrepreneurial policies to accommodate gender-sensitive issues and implement strategies that allow women economic opportunities (RSA 2017c: 16). The member's state was assigned to achieve the goals by 2015, which was not achievable as most countries defaulted in achieving these goals (RSA 2017b). However, the members of parliament were explicitly assigned to meet commitments by 2015 as a range of legislation, initiatives, programmes, and project have been implemented to improve the lives of women. The legislation was directed to gender equality and women's economic empowerment (RSA 2017b). To achieve this, the following acts were implemented to address women economic empowerment; (a) The National Education Act (No 27 of 1996); (b) Extension of security of Tenure Act (No 62 of 1997); (c) Basic Conditions of Employment Act (No 95 of 1997); (d) Employment Equity Act (No 55 of 1998); (e) Skills Development Act (No 97 of 1998); (f) Further Education and Training Act (No 98 of 1998); (g) Labor Relations Amendment Act (No 127 of 1998); (h) Land Restitution and Reform Law Amendment Act (No 63 of 1997 & 18 of 1999); (i) Promotional of equality & prevention of unfair Discrimination Act (no 4 of 2000); (j) Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (No 53 of 2003 (RSA 2017b: 16-17).

Despite all the initiated legislation, it was evident that the South African government has yet to put effective monitoring and oversight to enforce the legislation on women's economic empowerment in all sectors (RSA 2017b: 17). The report delivered by the South African parliament at the international women's conference 2017 presents the oversights and solutions on women economic empowerment that the South African parliament can engage. The first issue raised was that the parliament had overlooked the importance of evaluating and monitoring gender mainstreaming programs, reducing the impact of women

empowerment. For example, the parliament must conduct comprehensive schemes that address women's economic empowerment programs in the public and private sectors to ensure strategic and achievable goals (RSA 2017b: 19).

Secondly, there is a need for knowledge awareness on gender rights and policies as the public are unaware of the legislation surrounding women empowerment. Additionally, the parliament must identify the gaps in legislation and enforce it in every sector. Especially concerning paternity and maternity leave since women tend to leave their jobs due to family responsibilities if denied the opportunity of a helping hand. This reinforces gender roles and increases gender exclusion from economic participation (RSA 2017b: 20). Approving paternity leave will go a long way to promote women economic empowerment. Examples can be found in European countries like Canada, where men are also granted paternity leave to bond with their wives and kids.

In addition to the gaps identified above, the parliament also raised concerns about public participation engagement. The government does not know or address women's lived experiences in terms of 'health', 'violence', 'gender norms and poverty in the legislation. This has had a lesser impact on women participation in economic engagements. Encouraging public participation allows women to be informed on gender rights and to be able to access women's lived experiences in all spheres of life (RSA 2017b: 21). The last issue raised was the need for effective service delivery on corporate governance regarding the employment, tenders and awarding opportunities specifically for women in the country (RSA 2017b: 21). The government has overlooked this and needs to be redressed to increase participation in women economic empowerment.

Programs such as the B'avumile Skills development initiative, Technology for Women in Business (TWIB), South African Women Entrepreneurs' Network (SAWEN) and Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) have all been initiated by the South African Government with the help of all these Department of Trade and Industry or Department of Small Business Development to provide women established businesses strategies and measures to address challenges facing their enterprises and maintain a stable and self-sustained business (RSA 2017c: 17-18).

Despite implementing these policies and government initiatives to include women financially in South Africa, the role of women and access to financial services have not been specified clearly in the constitution and other policies that

have been implemented in South Africa. No policy restricts gender inequality within financial services, and this is a significant gap that has been identified during the study.

## **2.1 Governance Initiatives to monitor and regulate financial inclusion for women**

One of the first initiatives implemented by the South African government was 'Gender Budgeting efforts', which were critical instruments used by the government to promote financial inclusion and facilitate economic growth. Gender Budgeting is premised on two factors; (a) since gender inequality and women's needs enhance economic growth, fiscal policies must be directed to address these purposes; (b) fiscal policies influence economic and social outcomes; hence they can facilitate gender equality in any economy (Stotsky et al. 2016). In South Africa, there are two gender budgeting efforts, which led to some fiscal policy and administrative changes (Stotsky et al. 2016: 25). Even though the government stated it is committed to gender equality and women's needs, the two initiatives are not prominent. According to an IMF report in 2014, South Africa is categorised as a middle-income country and the most developed country in Sub-Saharan Africa (Stotsky et al. 2016). The recent report submitted to the Beijing +20 by the South African department of women, children and people with disabilities in 2014 stated that despite the country making progress in addressing poverty and gender inequality, the gender gap in poverty and employment rate amongst women and men are still relatively high (Stotsky et al. 2016: 25). The women's budget publication was initiated in 1995 to address policy prescription that specifies issues relating to women on their age, education, health care, welfare, housing, jobs and public employment, violence against women, extending time to cover revenue, donor intergovernmental finance issues. However, this initiative faded off with the resignation of appointees within the parliament and ministry of finance over time (Stotsky et al. 2016).

The second initiative was initiated in 1998-1999 by the national treasury with the support of the former committee, who facilitated the women budget scheme. This initiative was meant to be part of the commonwealth secretariat endorsed by commonwealth countries (Stotsky et al. 2016). Within the two years of this strategy life cycle, the issues and statistics surrounding gender in the

structural levels of the society and the action needed to facilitate better women participation in the socio-economy sector (Stotsky et al. 2016: 26). However, despite the disappearance of this initiative, some governmental departments like the Department of Trade and Industry undertook gender budgeting-related projects. They were the first to identify the gender gap in the budget provision on women small, medium and micro-enterprises (SMMEs), which they tried to address. The Department of Social Development also provided five budget programs for women (Stotsky et al. 2016: 25); (a) Reduction of the tax burden (Zero-rating) on kerosene to assist women who rely on this source of fuel; (b) Providing child support grant to primary workers; (c) Increase in the allocation of women SMMEs by the Department of Trade and Industry; (d) Equity in time spent in prison rations by both male and female prisoners; (e) Several fiscal policies or program changes at the national and provincial level on women; for example, Mr M.S. Shilowa, the premier of Gauteng province in 2003, implemented a policy addressing women's needs and facilitating gender equality within the province (Stotsky et al. 2016).

The statistics for child support grant continue to rise over the years; for agriculture, the government says it considers women farmers and try to address the challenges facing the gender farming factor; at the energy sector, women's role in the household for lighting, heating and cooking is accounted for, while the trade and industry proposed different programs to support and facilitate more women's participation in business (Stotsky et al. 2016: 27). Another initiative implemented by the government was adjusting the tax system to suit women without involving any element of discrimination. During apartheid, married women were regarded as 'Secondary earners' and paid more tax rate than unmarried men/women (Stotsky et al. 2016). However, the government amended this policy in 1995 and removed explicit discrimination against women in the tax code. Nevertheless, critics have reported pending concerns regarding this issue. The critics further postulate that income tax still contains an element of bias. It does not consider the female single-adult-headed households prominent in South African society since allowances for dependents accrue on the head of families (Stotsky et al. 2016).

## **2.2 Opportunities for women's financial inclusion**

There are different opportunities for financial inclusion for women in South Africa. According to the 2019 budget review (RSA 2019: 161), the government implemented a twin peaks legislation created by a new Ombud Council. The policy intends to facilitate better financial services for all citizens, especially women in the country.

*a. Access to Financial Services*

The FSC, with the help of all financial institutions, has provided various financial products to its consumers. In addition, services such as day-to-day transactions, savings products, low-income housing, financial credits, agricultural development schemes and other financial services have been put in place to assist all citizens in being financially included (Department of Women 2015c; Kostov, Arun and Annim 2015; RSA 2017a: 2019).

*b. Eradicating over-indebtedness*

The national treasury launched an investigation into the public servants' debit orders attached to their salaries. The project assisted government departments in differentiating valid requests from erroneous orders. This Act has improved the savings rate among citizens, and government workers, including women and the marginalised people, as statistics reflect that as of December 2017, South African public workers have saved R211 million (RSA 2019: 161).

*c. Financial Literacy*

To assist South African citizens and women in making sound financial decisions and planning for their financial needs, the national treasury, with the help of financial institutions and the National Financial Education Committee, has implemented 'Money Smart Week'. This initiative is an educative platform involving institutions, companies, schools and communities across the country (RSA 2019: 161). This is supported by the FSC, which, with the assistance of the Department of Trade and Industry and financial stakeholders, has provided BEE with adequate financial resources that promote productive and sustainable participation of the people (SARB 2019).

*d. Wholesale Market Conduct*

The South African Reserve Bank (SARB) commits to publishing financial markets review every quarter to assist all stakeholders in understanding the market conduct in the country (RSA 2019: 161). The initiative has helped women entrepreneurs access, network and sell products and services in wholesale markets.

*e. Stability, integrity and regulation in the financial sector*

The South African government is one of the continent's efficient and effective financial sectors. The government has set adequate policies to address, promote, and facilitate a sound and inclusive financial sector, sustainability, and reduce poverty and inequality (World Bank 2017).

Other initiatives implemented by the government that serves as an opportunity for female entrepreneurs include: (a) Lowering costs and consolidation of funds; (b) modernising and improving the governance of all retirement funds, ensuring benefits are claimed; (c) strengthening enforcement measures to deal with criminal and unethical practices; (d) ensuring all financial benefits are claimed through publicity and effective communication; and lastly (e) the government has to strengthen all legislative measures to deal with all criminal and unethical practices regarding the usage of financial products (RSA 2019: 164).

All these benefits have been implemented for all citizens to use financial services. However, women's participation in all these opportunities is not well specified to date, which justifies the importance of this research. The current report released on the budget review for 2019 (RSA 2019) speculates that the government will release information on achieving equality in financial inclusion in 2018. However, the report is yet to be released. Therefore, this study intends to assist the government and stakeholders on the factors to consider in achieving equal financial inclusion.

### **2.3 Attempts of financial institutions towards financial inclusion for women**

*a. Mzansi Account*

The government attempted to improve the financial inclusion of the impoverished using the Mzansi account, which was introduced in 2004. All South African banks paired up with Post Bank (South African state bank) to launch a banking product aimed at lower-level consumers who never had

any previous experience in banking (Kostov et al. 2015: 279; Abrahams 2017: 650). Although the Mzansi account opened channels for the unbanked to have access in South Africa, a report from the World Bank in 2013 stated that only three and a half million funds were actively used. Kostov et al. (2015: 281) argue that people's perception of the high charges of bank transactions could contribute to the findings. Despite all these findings, Kostov et al. (2015: 281) argue that the Mzansi account was a significant contribution that improved financial inclusion in South Africa.

*b. Capitec Bank*

Capitec Bank shifted the focus of the banking sector by promoting the economic welfare of citizens through the provision of client engagement, capacity financial training, intervention programs for schools and corporate social investment. Before Capitec, the banking sector used to be dominated by four central banks that accounted for 84% of the country's banking, which created a monopolistic banking structure. In addition, the regulations surrounding the banks were rigid, with no special dispensation for non-banks and e-money providers (Abrahams 2017: 650). Capitec Bank provides an effective and unique package for their customers through 'Global One', which is an initiative that allows an individual client to possess 'a transaction account, four savings accounts, access to credit, mobile phone banking and internet banking for a monthly fee of R5.25' (Abrahams 2017: 651). This project has had a significant impact on financial inclusion in South Africa, as the number of Capitec branches has increased from 52 in 2015 to 826 in 2019 (Capitec Bank 2018).

*c. National Credit Act*

The National Credit Act has set goals intended to improve the opportunities to possess asset accumulation for the less privileged in the country. This is envisaged to improve access to finance, reduce the cost of finance and increase customer protection (Kostov et al. 2015: 281). The initial National Credit Act (NCA) (No. 34 of 2005) excluded many South Africans from the credit market since credit was only approved based on secure premises. However, the new regulations for equal access were made effective in 2015, which has assisted most citizens in accessing credit facilities (Abrahams 2017: 652).

*d. Shoprite and Pick'n Pay Money Transfer*

Shoprite and Pick n Pay implemented an initiative that allows money transfer solutions to send and receive money at any branch. Users are not expected to have a bank account and must possess a valid South African identity document to access the service. The only condition is to pay an affordable transfer fee in which there is no cost incurred for the receiver of the money (Abrahams 2017: 653).

*e. Mobile banking*

Most banks in South Africa have now adopted mobile banking services, which has significantly advanced financial inclusion. However, banks offering mobile banking need to have a banking license before providing the services (Abrahams 2017). In conjunction with Nedbank, Vodacom South Africa implemented the M-Pesa money transfer in 2010 (Abrahams 2017). However, M-Pesa has not been as successful as envisaged, as the South African economy is already a cashless society and implementing another cashless system is unnecessary and ineffective. In addition, M-Pesa was meant to use unstructured supplementary service data (USSD) technology made available to Vodacom users; however, this has proven to be ineffective (Abrahams 2017).

WIZZIT banking initiative is a strategy in which an organisation initially from South African Bank of Athens (currently repositioned as Grobank) launched in 2004 by offering services through the mobile phone banking system, which uses the 'pay-as-you-go' model, where users pay per each transaction. As a result, it does not need monthly fees attached to the product, and it is available on the MTN and Vodacom networks (Abrahams 2017: 654).

Furthermore, mobile money is a strategy that has been made accessible to all South Africans. It is the safest and most inexpensive way of banking available on all mobile networks. Checks have been provided to reduce fraud and risk, and users can send money instantly to any South African mobile number. Money can also be deposited or withdrawn at any retail store using mobile money (Abrahams 2017: 654).

In addition to these are the weakly regulated operators who cater to the needs of the less-developed economy. Operators like informal stokvels (rotation of savings and credit associations), financial co-operatives and non-bank credit providers also play an essential role in promoting financial inclusion in South Africa. However, South Africa needs to improve interoperability across payment

platforms to advance financial inclusion in the country. Furthermore, South Africa should finalise its national financial strategy, which is 1% from the NDP goal of 90% financial inclusion by 2030 – since the 2015 Finscope report stated that 89% of the population are financially included (Abrahams 2017: 656). However, the researcher argued that the number and significance of women in financial inclusion in savings and investment should be addressed and implemented correctly to have effective and efficient socio-economic growth.

The recent effort made by the National Treasury was achieved through the help of FinMark Trust, which facilitated four basic schemes to promote the continued extension of access and benefits to South Africa financial services infrastructure to all citizens. This is to be achieved by addressing constraining factors to beneficial and responsible usage, which alleviates poverty, inequality and unemployment (FinMark Trust 2018: 12). The four schemes are addressed in the section below:

*a. Risk-Based Approach Pilot project*

South African government signed the financial intelligence Centre (FIC) amendment act into the law, which meant the introduction of the risk-based approach (RBA) to the management of AML and CTF in South Africa (FinMark Trust 2018: 13). This Act enables a risk assessment for low-value remittances and bank accounts on financial products; describes a proper framework on financial service providers that support the implementation risk assessment; and access the cost of compliance related to a well-developed framework for financial service providers (FinMark Trust 2018: 13).

*b. Promotion of benefits on financial services usage*

Despite most South Africans being financially included and having access to financial products, the knowledge awareness level relating to financial products is shallow. Therefore, the proper dissemination or use of these financial products is not effective as it should be. In line with this factor, the government, with the assistance of the FinMark Trust, aim to encourage financial service providers to use analytical tools to address this issue (FinMark Trust 2018: 13).

*c. Inclusion Policy Coordination and Advocacy*

The FinMark Trust assisted the national treasury in updating the national financial inclusion policy, which develops a financial inclusion monitor that will effectively address the future use of the progress and achievement of the

goals set in this policy (FinMark Trust 2018: 13).

*d. Enabling SME Inclusion*

Small-medium enterprises (SMEs) have had access to appropriate financial services, enabling enterprises' financial well-being and growth, leading to economic development, reducing poverty, and increasing employment levels. However, the present reality of SME services delivery is that SME's access and usage of credit and other financial products are limited based on the provision of credits to individuals (FinMark Trust 2018: 14).

### **3. Findings on institutional role and governance on financial inclusion for women in South Africa**

The study investigates the impact of institutional quality and governance on financial inclusion for women in South Africa and analyses the research gap regarding the context. The study employed the findings of current postgraduate research. Data was collected qualitatively from three groups of participants: 30 women entrepreneurs, five government officials/policymakers and five Banking Sector representatives. The study used codes to present the participant's views on the study's findings. Qualitative research was deemed fit to address the study's objective since the focus is on the impact of Institutional Quality and Governance on Financial Inclusion for Women in South Africa. The study population was selected from women entrepreneurs, government policymakers and financial representatives from Gauteng province in South Africa. The participants were selected through purposive and snowball sampling, and analysis was represented thematically in line with the focus of the study (Ojo 2020). The research also engaged the research paradigm, which are instruments from both positivist and interpretive paradigms, for example, interviews, observations, and graphical illustrations, to analyse the data. This paradigm allows the researcher to use diagrams and charts to support the qualitative data findings (Gelling 2015).

Understanding the perspectives of key policy stakeholders on the institutional role and governance on financial inclusion for women in South Africa was one of the most important objectives of the study. The results highlight the institutional roles and knowledge awareness of governmental roles on financial inclusion for women.

### **3.1 Women Entrepreneurs Insights**

Women entrepreneurs were asked questions on knowledge awareness on institutional quality and financial inclusion for South African women. The results portray a racial bias in the formulation of policies on financial inclusion as most participants believe the policies implemented is set to benefit a certain race within the country, though not generally distributed. Furthermore, if any, the policies implemented do not necessarily address the injustices of the past. Thus, gender inequality persists in the country.

The findings highlight that out of the 30 women entrepreneurs interviewed, 25 participants (83%) agreed that there are no policies and initiatives available on financial inclusion for women. However, four participants (14%) agreed that policies helped them achieve a lot in business but are not generalised as it is only for the selected few borne out of political connections. Only one person (3%) said that they were unaware of any policies.

The researcher asked the women entrepreneurs what they thought about existing government measures on women's financial inclusion. From the perspectives presented in section 7.7 of the study, different government measures are provided. Twenty-one participants (70%) acknowledged they are aware of existing governmental actions to assist female entrepreneurs in terms of financial inclusion, of which four participants (13%) are total beneficiaries of the schemes. However, the remaining seven participants (23%) were unaware of existing government measures for female entrepreneurs, and five participants (17%) were only aware of private institutions that assist female entrepreneurs. Out of the 30, 15 entrepreneurs (50%) deliberately do not go to the trouble to access information on financial inclusion for women because it is not equally distributed among the applicants, especially the poor and the marginalised. For a proper understanding of participants' knowledge awareness, questions were also asked on the current measures provided by the government to assist the women entrepreneurs on financial security. Different categories of women entrepreneurs gave different opinions on existing government measures. Existing measures identified include the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Black Business Supplier Development Program (BBSDP), Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), Department of Social Development, Small Enterprise Finance Agency (SEFA), Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) and Cooperatives

Incentives Scheme (SIC). Other factors mentioned are People opposing women abuse (POWA), Businesswomen Association for South Africa (BWASA), Black Businesswomen Association (BBWA), MultiChoice, Institutions for girls who fell pregnant in school and Women Development and Empowerment Conference for Farmers.

From these perspectives, it has been indicated that existing government measures are implemented to assist female entrepreneurs. Also, there is awareness of these existing measures. One participant (P8) said, ‘the government has tried to notify and create awareness of financial aids for women. Despite these efforts, the question of easy accessibility is raised’ (Interview with P8, 9th January 2020). Half of the participants said they have never gone to the trouble of accessing these initiatives, as most people they know say it is a waste of time. Women are selected based on political referrals and sometimes nepotism. Therefore, not every woman has access, as there is no equal distribution or fair practice from the government.

This led us back to the concept of structural inequality in society; as Bottero (2005) mentioned, structural inequality continues to be an issue of concern for the state. To date, South Africa is still regarded as one of the top unequal societies. This affects all levels of society and remains a plague to be resolved.

### ***3.2 Financial Institutions Representatives Insights***

The study collected data from five prominent financial institutions in the country with senior management in the workplace with more than two years of working experience based on the participant’s capacity. All financial institutions representatives indicated a massive gap in financial inclusion for women in South Africa. The results highlighted different institutions in charge of financial inclusion in South Africa. Such as the National Treasury, which is solely responsible for financial inclusion in South Africa; the South African Reserve Bank; FinMark Trust; government stakeholders, Private sectors, NGOs and Civil Societies. All these institutions have facilitated and contributed towards an effective and enriched survey and designing of questionnaires. These surveys provide cross-cutting learning and sharing of information regarding financial inclusion and services to each economy (Finmark Trust 2016: 2). However, despite all these measures and institutions, there is no specific policy addressing

financial inclusion for women in the country (Abrahams 2017: 649).

One of the participants (a business manager with 11 years of banking experience and dealing with Private wealth business banking) stated that:

there is no real awareness on financial inclusion for women in the country. No specific product has been designed to assist women financially. The reason is that there are no justified products on what women require in financial institutions. There is no education on gender financial securities and no knowledge that limits women to own properties and be financially literate from a young age. More male businesses are looking for funding more than women businesses, and most women entrepreneurs are either partners or undermen entrepreneurs, which makes the gender subtler. This is a huge gap that needs to be redressed as a male-dominated world, and women conduct only 10% of businesses. (Interview with P31, 2nd October 2019)

The results practically present the current state of financial institutions initiatives on financial inclusion for women to understand the financial institutions standing and the mechanisms or enterprises provided by the financial institutions in promoting financial inclusion for women. As mentioned in the literature, financial institutions are capitalist organisations and only work with profit margins. There are hardly any initiatives that accommodate women entrepreneurs specifically except if they met the required margins to access financial services. To reduce the incidences of women exclusion in the financial sector, the state must purposely work in partnership with owners of capital to engage in liberal and equity policies through capacity training and accessing the financial resources available for women in South Africa, among others policies (Johnson & Williams 2016: 727). Furthermore, most of the participants indicated that, 'All financial institutions have a different benchmark on financial inclusion and financial services, and therefore the offerings offered are different. The financial products offered are objective and not gender-specific. Therefore, both male and female can have access to it' (Interview with P32, 2nd October 2019).

The results only identified one financial representative who indicated that one of the South African banks (Absa) has financial products addressing women. According to her,

...there is an initiative called the 'Absa Women Empowerment Fund' - which offers loans with a minimum of R50000 to R3 million rand for women empowerment. Also, an 'Absa Rise innovation' initiative selects women entrepreneurs annually and assists with business programs to close the gender gap in entrepreneurship. (Interview with P32, 2nd October 2019)

This result reveals that the financial sector has started recognising the gender gap in financial inclusion and adding efforts to mitigate this.

### **3.3 Policy Makers Insights**

The policymakers' findings were quite insightful as most participants indicated that financial inclusion for women is an ongoing debate that the government and institutions have yet to implement into the system. In terms of policies set in place to address financial inclusion for women, all participants agreed that there is no specific policy addressing financial inclusion for women in South Africa (Interview with P36, 23rd July 2019). Even though the government has put different measures to address gender equality, the debate on financial inclusion has always been generalised and not gender-specific.

From the findings, women are not currently prioritised. There is access to finance but no access to information, as incentives such as Cooperative Incentives Scheme (CIS), Black Business Supplier and Development Program (BBSDP) and Informal Enterprise Development Programme (IEDP) are implemented by the government stakeholders for women to access financial services.

Despite the department developing a new scheme to address financial inclusion for women, although not legit yet, financial inclusion for women is still far reached in South Africa. Male counterparts get more salaries even if they are on the same level as women and still do the same job. Women have accepted the discrepancies such as Family responsibilities and black tax, limiting them from saving and investing for the family. (Interview with P36, 23rd July 2019)

The participants were asked what measures had been taken to ensure gender equality in line with the constitution, and the departments gave different

initiatives. Some government departments offer programs and initiatives on gender emancipation from the results. In contrast, most departments are not servicing delivery departments but rather monitor, allocate, and evaluate women programs in all departments within the presidency. The findings indicated that only three government departments sampled offer programmes and initiatives. In contrast, the fourth department does not deliver services but monitors, allocates and evaluates women's programmes in all departments within the presidency. The last department does not have programmes for women's empowerment and is currently working to establish an entrepreneurs' program for women. The fifth department also indicated no gender mainstreaming programs for women's financial inclusion. Even so, the results are narrowed, and further research is needed to have a detailed understanding of institutional and government efforts to mandate gender equality in its system.

#### **4. Discussions on Institutional Quality and Governance on Financial Inclusion for Women in South Africa**

In South Africa, the government has initiated different policies to improve financial inclusion as part of the development plan. However, the financial inclusion for women persists to date. All the policies undertaken are designed to assist the people in terms of financial services. Challenges continue to be a constraint hindering the government from achieving sustainable financial inclusion. On the part of the participants, it has been indicated that existing government measures are implemented to assist women. Also, there is awareness of these existing measures. It means the government has tried to notify and create awareness on financial aids for women, and according to some participants, information is everywhere. Despite these efforts, the question of easy accessibility is raised. Half of the participants say they have never tried to access these initiatives, as most people they know say it is a waste of time. Not every woman has access, as there is no equal distribution and fair practice from the government.

Moreover, the financial institution representatives believe that most South African financial institutions have not yet implemented gender-specific measures addressing women's financial inclusion. Instead, they offer a general service. The general notion is that the bank focuses on making a profit, which is the core

value of banking services. Therefore, assistance is only given to creditworthy candidates. Unfortunately, the poor and the disadvantaged are left out. The policymakers' perspectives are that although some departments embrace gender mainstreaming measures, others have not.

To provide an unbiased financial inclusion system, the government should take the initiative and implement and set projects in motion towards gender-sensitive financial freedom. The South African policy on financial inclusion for women has yet to be effective, and the tenets of the policy do not aid citizens in demanding fair and equal treatment. The literature and participants highlighted different government measures. All these institutions contribute towards promoting and enhancing financial inclusion for women and equity among women in the country. Some government departments undertook gender budgeting-related projects that are still sustainable to date. The departments were the first to identify the gender gap in providing a budget for women's small, medium and micro enterprises, which they tried to address. However, government officials have raised concerns about the lack of monitoring and evaluation of previous initiatives on financial inclusion for women, which collapsed. To date, there are no specific measures directly addressing women's financial inclusion.

## **5. Conclusion**

From the statistics and the information gathered, it was clear that financial inclusion for women has not yet been prioritised by institutions and government bodies in South Africa. From the study, most female entrepreneurs are not aware of the initiatives surrounding financial inclusion for women and how to access it. Moreover, on the part of the financial institutions, the general notions received on financial institutions' role speak to the fact that women do not have the liberty of being the key player. Most financial institutions look at the business before determining the qualifying factors, which women often do not meet. Financial institutions work with all clients, regardless of gender. On the policymakers, all the perspectives indicated reveal that the government sector is just starting to realise the importance of financial inclusion for women as a tool for women's empowerment, and efforts are being made to strategise this policy. Policies look good on paper but are not applicable and practical. The

government is still struggling to achieve it since relevant stakeholders are not involved. During implementation, the relevant stakeholders to highlight the specific needs needed by women are not present. The policies are just made and passed for performance, which is not feasible and often collapses. Nanziri (2016) agrees with this as he says that programs and initiatives are subtle and do not necessarily address women's financial inclusion.

The critical answer that stood out from the study is that the government should facilitate and have straightforward programmes on gender budgeting and assist women in being economically empowered and self-sustainable. Secondly, all stakeholders should have sufficient financial aids available for female entrepreneurs without financial requirements that exclude women. There should be equal access to financial services, mentoring, and support systems for women. Lastly, the government should provide more programmes for monitoring and facilitating women entrepreneurs for business sustainability. The policy should provide the treatment of women entrepreneurs to be reasonable and fair to support and assist them in surviving against all the odds. Policy reformulations and knowledge awareness for citizens can also alleviate social problems, enhancing women's socio-economic development.

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# Is South Africa Building a Capable State through Developmental Local Government?

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## Abstract

It is widely agreed that service provision is the biggest challenge facing South African municipalities and particularly smaller municipalities. This paper analyses the South African municipal government with a focus on how it responds to the vision to build a capable state through developmental government – and the effects of political interference and corruption - to find ways to reduce the problem of service delivery. A qualitative approach was used, and data were collected from various jurisdictions through record review and telephone interviews to fill data knowledge gaps. Most municipalities have described clean water, work prospects and free basic services as the key service delivery obstacles that hinder the realisation of a developmentally competent local government in South Africa. The discussion finds that yet another problem is political interference in municipal administration. Although public engagement in civic affairs is a legal necessity, much remains to be done to bring about meaningful participation. Sanitation has always been a challenge for service delivery, particularly in rural communities, due primarily to a lack of infrastructure. Lastly, it was found that municipalities must do more to create human resources to provide services reflecting a developmentally competent South African local government.

**Keywords:** Service delivery challenges; participatory democracy; good governance; local governance; citizen participation; accountable governance.

## 1. Introduction

South Africa has three spheres of government: National, Provincial and Local Government. Of the three, the local government sphere is closest to the people. Particularly in South Africa, the local government sphere is expected to play a strategically important developmental role and act as the epicentre of service delivery. For this reason, the local government in this country has a mammoth task to fulfil. Since 1994, different stakeholders have made various attempts to address challenges of political interference, corruption, and deployment of cadres, who sometimes lack the necessary skills. However, significant problems remain despite development, such as increased housing access, and potable water and electricity supply. Based on the context and reasoning for this paper, the South African Local Government Association (SALGA 2016) states that the South African Constitution (1996) envisaged the local government sphere playing a transformative role by offering a mechanism for reliable, secure and sensitive service delivery to improve the well-being of people since they pay for service delivery. SALGA was founded in 1997 and was intended to ‘represent, promote and protect local government interests and raise the profile of the standard of living thereof of the ratepayers in the municipal areas’ (SALGA 2016). It further noted that the organisation had a strong strategic role in serving local government interests within the larger government system and assisting its members in fulfilling their developmental duties (SALGA 2016). It claims to set out six pillar mandates dealing with, among other things: capacity building in local government, focusing on leadership and technical capacity building in municipalities, and support and advice for the successful implementation of municipal mandates, including awareness and information sharing aimed at promoting peer learning in the sector and encouraging service delivery. Therefore, the overriding question of this paper is: Are South African local municipalities the tools of effective and efficient local service delivery, backed by a capable state and developmental local government whose impact is merely a short drive from the fog into the light — or are they moving further into the dark?

Previous pre-1994 regimes generated complex problems at the local level, from racially motivated urban planning to unequally financed Bantustans. The local government in South Africa has a tremendous job in addressing these legacies. Different stakeholders have made various attempts since 1994 to address

these challenges. However, despite some development, such as increased housing access and potable water and electricity supply, significant problems remain at both national and local government levels. Thus, the need for the constant pursuit of viable solutions remains. Equally, there is a need to continuously monitor local government and its stakeholders to ascertain whether they are on the right path.

Considering the above, an argument is made for this paper, including its rationale. As this and the previous problem statement will show, local government can be called a 'house of chaos', as stated by Amtaika (2013: 291-307), hence the clarion call made by SALGA's 2016 conference for the sector to get its house in order. This is a massive call for a single study to assess the issue, particularly since there are complexities associated with South Africa's categorisation of local government, exacerbated by the country's notorious past. Indeed, South African local municipalities are not entirely the same, and thus, a 'one size fits all approach' does not work; however, lessons may still be learned and shared. To determine these lessons, the research question is asked here: What is the state of governance in South Africa in terms of a framework for good governance? Specifically, is the South African Local Government a strong instrument for efficient and sensitive structural impact service delivery? A brief analysis of the literature shows several philosophical problems, given the general agreement that good governance is vital. To this end, an attempt is made to include a summary of these issues and a synthesis of them under the preliminary literature review. Methodological issues follow on from this. The study builds on the foundation of a qualitative research tradition, with a selection of elements of mixed research approaches.

## **2. Literature on Local Governance and Democracy**

From the outset, it seems appropriate to ask what local government is before trying to bring the need to transform it to the forefront. The local sphere of government is sometimes referred to as 'grassroots' democracy, according to Van Niekerk, Van der Waldt, and Jonker (2001: 77). This is due to the local government's proximity to and close relationship with societies. Du Toit and Van der Waldt (1999: 250) describe the local government in South Africa as an agency created by law by the national government for the citizens of a given region. The authors further note that it is an agency that can exercise legislative authority in a region demarcated by statute and by a competent authority. According to them, local government

can also be defined as a heterogeneous body with the power and authority to provide services and amenities to citizens in its area of jurisdiction and preserve and promote their well-being within the limits of legislation by the central and relevant provincial governments. Daily Maverick (2020.07.13) reports that the government is perceived as involving municipal and metro administration and that the sector is currently considered the most dysfunctional in South Africa.

On the transformation front, Du Toit and Van Der Waldt (1999: 252–253) reported that the danger of local government failing in black communities grew towards the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. This was partly due to the non-payment of rent and utility fees and the ongoing resignations of remaining city counsellors from the previous dispensation. In 1992, the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) held talks with the then local government minister on reforming local government in South Africa (Cloete 1995: 4). Such discussions led to the creation, on 22 March 1993, of a regional forum - the forum for local government negotiations. This platform had to act as the principal negotiation mechanism for reforming local governments. According to Sentiwe (undated), 50% of members represented statutory institutions, and the remaining 50% were non-statutory institutions. The forum was managed by a committee consisting of two Local Government Negotiating Forum chairmen (LGNF) and 10 LGNF members. A model for local government reform was created through negotiation and consensus and was introduced to the Multi-Party Negotiating Process (MPNP). This model was updated and approved by the MPNP at the Kempton Park World Trade Centre.

The advent of democracy heralded a political shift and symbolised the hopes of millions of South Africans who had been side-lined by the pre-1994 regimes. While they seem to have been overshadowed by negotiations at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), which resulted in the 1993 interim constitution, some of these expectations and ambitions were codified by the LGNE. As a result, a critically important developmental task has been housed within the local government sphere ever since (Tau 2016: 8). A developed local government implies a local government collaborating with different stakeholders, including communities, to establish effective ways of enhancing overall socio-economic well-being and thereby increasing the quality of their living standards (Van der Waldt 2014: 21; Koma 2010: 111-113; South African Constitution 1996: section 152). Steps have been taken to this end, though significant obstacles remain. There

have been some significant improvements by local government in South Africa since the democratic dispensation of the mid-1990s. So far, South Africa appears to have transformed from racially-divisive and fragmented ‘bantustans’ into an integrated democratic local government facilitating local democracy (Ramaphosa 2017: 15). Manyoni (2017) and Van der Waldt (2014: 18) both accept that South Africa has steadfastly tried to reposition itself from being a national government instrument to an autonomous realm with the capacity to raise revenue, provide large basic services to millions of South Africans, and develop local economies. According to RSA, Auditor-General (2020), nearly 60% of municipalities now have unqualified audits. Eighty-seven municipalities and entities in the Red Zone in 2018-19, and 18 had clean audits. Fifty-four municipalities were regarded as safe audits in 2018-19, and only 40 municipalities and agencies were in the red zone. Furthermore, notably, there was an average increase of 90% in demonstrable spending power and operating budgets (RSA Auditor General 2020). It may be argued that while, to some degree, municipalities share the responsibility for the poor state of their affairs, many of the socio-economic problems facing South Africa remain profoundly related to its infamous past. This is especially so with regard to urban planning, which has consequences for the growth of local economies and, by extension, deprivation, inequality and unemployment (NDP 2011; 2013: 365), which, jointly and separately, influence the free demand and collection of revenue for essential service delivery by every municipality, among others. Nevertheless, because of issues relevant to their background, from the political environment to structural structures, many municipalities cannot adequately perform their functions. The general concern of this study is with these kinds of issues. The latest South African Local Government Association theme, ‘Creating a Green, Responsive and People-Centred Local Government’ (2016), called on municipalities ‘[to] get their houses in order’ (Kgosana 2017: 11). Although this is undoubtedly a noble call, it is fair to argue that communities must first embark on a research project to uncover and better understand the root problems that hinder their attempts to administer, grow and deliver services.

A major factor that undermines South Africa’s social and economic progress is the deficit in the capabilities of the state. This gap was identified some time ago by the National Planning Commission, first in its diagnostic report in 2011 and again when it issued its final National Development Plan in 2012. The plan is the country’s blueprint for fixing its problems.

### 3. Theoretical Considerations

The principles of good governance and participatory democracy in this paper both serve as an appropriate basis for building the study. The theories of good governance and participatory democracy provide clear theoretical explanations on conceptualising and contextualising good governance for a developmentally capable state.

In addition, the use of the principles of the theory of good governance allows the researcher to predict future events and opportunities. As noted in the introduction, the value of the theoretical framework is that it helps to organise the paper. In this paper, the selection of good governance theory is important to the analysis, as the theory's underpinnings describe the causal determinants of perceived specific needs and how the needs form the functioning of humans; they also do not position basic needs in one class. The theory factors affecting the functioning of administrative management in certain circumstances and conditions, since administrations do not experience the same struggles, means that administrative needs differ from one municipality to another. Moreover, through good governance theory, one can incorporate the needs of the ratepayers into the municipality's developmental character to explain their socio-economic position, which has been the result of several factors that have harmed their participatory functioning in the running of their civic affairs. Thus, the theory helps one understand why ratepayers experience such governance problems and effectively explains how the municipality takes certain administrative measures to adequately meet the requirements for a developmentally competent, properly-operating municipality. It is imperative to note the complexity of defining service delivery challenges facing South Africa's local government from the outset. In a developmental local government, the definition of service delivery challenges has gone beyond simply referring to ratepayers as individuals who pay for rates but also includes non-statutory members who opposed the oppressive apartheid regime.

As per Walker (2020), participatory democracy underlines the broad involvement of constituents in the direction and functioning of political systems. Democratic etymological origins (Greek *demos* and *kratos*) mean that the people are in control and that all elections are participatory. US political scientist Diamond (2015) of The Freeman Spogli Institute for International

Studies argues that democracy consists of four main elements: a democratic structure for choosing and changing government by free and fair elections; active participation of the people, as citizens, in politics and public life; preservation of the human rights of all citizens and active democratic auctioning and behaving in a manner acceptable to all involved. Participatory democracy requires more lay citizen participation in decision-making and offers greater democratic representation than conventional representative democracy, e.g. broader control of proxies provided to members by those who become personally involved and actively vote. Voting is one way of being interested in our democracy. People can even contact their officials to endorse a law or amend it. Voting in an election and contacting our elected officials are two ways for South Africans to engage in local government's democratic and competent state in their democracy. In Qobo's (2020) view, however, a strong democratic, developmental and capable state is where people and citizens govern themselves to the greatest extent possible, instead of delegating their power and responsibility to representatives acting in their names.

As a nation, South Africa has a distinguished history of popular participation in the battle for democracy. Mass participation and popular control characterised the discourse of struggle under the largely African National Congress (ANC) aligned national liberation movement. As critics of apartheid and as free people, South Africans have demonstrated their ability to participate in democracy.

#### **4. Our Research Approach**

The paper is based on qualitative research study's architecture, an approach that enables researchers to analyse social and cultural phenomena in an organised and systematic way, allowing for a social construction interpretation of truth (Hanekom 2006; Lopez & Abod 2013). The researcher interviewed councillors selected through a purposive sampling strategy in this study. Supervisors in contract companies were purposely selected for in-depth interviews since they enable probing to understand participants' perspectives extensively (Du Plooy-Cilliers et al. 2014: 142). The researcher had to interview municipal officials and local government politicians in public areas, mindful of potential hazards caused by Covid-19. Written documents were also used to derive insights (Payne & Payne; 2004 and 2006 by Mogalakwe).

Various approaches to best practices about good governance and local government development or agreements are discussed below to ensure participatory democratic local governance and development among people and protect lives and citizens' rights in civil society. Qualitative data were collected from primary and secondary sources, including internet links, books, studies, newspapers, policy briefs, journals, blogs, news bulletins, and official records and statements on local and capable South African developmental government. Therefore, this paper contributes and makes suggestions, based on a Sustainable Developmental Strategy, for fostering good governance and participatory democracy for local and competent state development in South Africa. More than 70 journal articles from various sources have been studied, with various search criteria about local developmental government in South Africa applied. An evaluation of the material revealed 46 items of literature of reference to this paper.

## **5. Auditor-General Flags Lack of Accountability as the Major Cause of Poor Local Government Audit Results**

The 2018-19 Auditor-General's (2020) report states that the overall downturn in audit outcomes has overshadowed the efforts of pro-active municipalities. Releasing his latest municipal audit report of 2018-19 on the performance of South Africa's municipalities, the South African Auditor-General (AG), Makwetu (2020), said that municipalities were in an undesirable state of worsening audit outcomes, showing that various local government role players have been slow in implementing, and in several instances even disregarding the audit office's recommendations. This general report deals with the audit results of the local government for the financial year ending 30 June 2019. This precedes the Public Audit Act changes, which became effective on 1 April 2019. Accordingly, the specifications of these amendments will be applicable for the first time to audit reports published for the financial years that began on or after 31 March 2019. Such reforms incorporate the definition of a material irregularity in audits conducted under the Public Audit Act and, once a material irregularity has been found, may result in a variety of potential acts, including the referral of the material irregularity to an investigative body, where there are complicated and nuanced matters not capable of being concluded directly by the audit. If

a recommendation is made via an audit, it will be expected to be done within a period prescribed by the auditors, without which, the auditors will give a binding remedial action to the accounting officer to remedy the found material irregularity, also within a prescribed period. Makwetu has persistently called on those charged with administration and oversight to look at basic systems and controls as the foundation for proper accountability to the citizens of the country in order to ensure that taxpayers' monies are spent in a disciplined manner in line with the prescripts set out in the many pieces of legislation governing the proper running of municipalities, and so that citizens can derive the expected benefits from this spending.

However, in his final local government report, the AG tells a disturbing tale of most municipalities 'crippled by debt and being unable to pay for water and electricity; unreliable and lacklustre revenue collection; spending that is unauthorised, sporadic, fruitless and wasteful; and a heavy reliance on grants and assistance from national government'. There are few municipalities whose diligence is recorded. Makwetu also recognises the municipalities' efforts that have obtained, or retained, clean audits and detailed how they operated to achieve this. 'The financial statements of a municipality tell the story of how well a municipality is run. As is the case with these few municipalities, it can be a good story of prudent spending that achieves value for money; rigorous billing and collecting practices; properties that are retained and safeguarded; cautious contributions and savings for emergencies and future projects; and promises to creditors and the community being honoured' (Makwetu 2020). Thirteen of these municipalities are in the Western Cape, including the Cape Winelands and West Coast district municipalities, Berggrivier, Cape Agulhas, Cederberg, Drakenstein, Hessequa, Langeberg, Overstrand, Prince Albert, Saldanha Bay, Theewaterskloof and Witzenberg. Other municipalities that regularly perform well are Senqu (Eastern Cape), Midvaal (Gauteng), Okhahlamba (KwaZulu-Natal), Capricorn district municipality (Limpopo), Gert Sibanda and Nkangala district municipalities (Mpumalanga), and John Taolo Gaetsewe district municipality (Northern Cape). The best practices in these jurisdictions included a cohesive leadership dedicated to a good management system and successful governance. Continuous monitoring of audit action plans to fix any audit findings timeously, and a constructive approach to coping with emerging threats were standard features at these municipalities.

## 6. Local Government and the Developmental State: A Discussion

The term 'service delivery' is a widely used term to describe the provision of basic communal needs and services, such as housing, water and sanitation, land, energy, and infrastructure, on which local people have grown to rely for their daily survival. However, in South Africa, the supply and continuing maintenance of these fundamental utilities has proven inconsistent at times, causing significant inconvenience and putting local populations at risk. The outcome has been an increase in service delivery protests, or rallies, seeking 'better service delivery' – notably in the last decade. As the National Development Plan (NDP) (2011; 2013) shows, South Africa's increasing inequality, poverty rates, and unemployment are unacceptably high, hence the need for a 'capable developmental state' to take centre stage in reversing the country's path. If we are serious, as a country, about local government, what we need is to address the triple problems of unemployment, deprivation, and inequality; a state must be able to play a transformative, strategic, and capable role. This involves, among other things, well-run and efficiently organised state institutions staffed by professional civil servants dedicated to the public good and willing to provide consistently high-quality services to all South Africans while prioritising the development goals of the country. This will allow people from all walks of society to have confidence in the state, which will strengthen the state's effectiveness (National Planning Commission 2013: 365).

A capable local government of the state - and development - inevitably involves, among other aspects, well-governed municipalities which can play their part in 'prioritising the development goals of the nation' (National Planning Commission 2013: 365). Therefore, the question is whether South African municipalities are well-governed enough to serve this role. To address this question, Kgosana (2017: 11) suggests that '[they] must be efficient tools of service delivery [characterised by sound judgment, financial sustainability and good governance in general] for municipalities to be confidently assumed to be well-governed.' However, there seems to be an over-emphasis on effectiveness, as can already be deduced, probably, with the view that this is necessary to yield developmental fruit. Nevertheless, is this the case for necessity? From the literature on local government, while not strictly causal, there is a correlational relationship between political interference, lack of skills, corruption, and poor service delivery

to citizens. As stated by the OECD (2013), productivity enhances institutional confidence in government, and this, in effect, may contribute positively to the credibility, commitment and ability of social partners to collaborate in the pursuit of shared objectives such as the development of prosperity, which would enhance the quality and well-being of people when benefits fall away. However, if the traditional market-led economy is anything to go by, the trickle-down theory does not always seem to hold. There have been several global development examples without the general population sharing in the gains. It is worth mentioning that effective and efficient municipal administration is an aspect of South Africa's notion of local government development. The theory is that if there is good governance, efficient and effective growth will occur. Whatever the case, considering variables such as sizes, typologies, locations, and historical factors of municipalities in South Africa, it is practically impossible to provide a clear answer as to whether municipalities in South Africa are successful tools of service delivery because there is no one-size-fits-all approach showing how good governance influences growth. However, obviously, the persistent warning, or even the mandate, of municipalities 'keeping their houses in order' during the 2016 SALGA Conference seems to indicate that municipalities are failing, although this does not similarly extend to all municipalities. Therefore, for practical reasons, it is by individual assessments and evaluations that one will know whether a municipality is in order and to what degree that is the case when juxtaposed with its obligations in the field of growth. Although oversight by South Africa's Auditor-General's office is effective, problems such as public engagement and political dynamics are still not properly considered. It does not attempt to grapple with the evolutionary impact of municipal malfeasance.

Specifically, it focuses on financial reporting and sustainability. Therefore, studies that take a broader approach to provide insight into issues of non-financial governance and their effect are important. The year 2020 marked twenty-four years since the adoption of the democratic constitution of the new democratic South Africa in 1996 and, by extension and in principle, the mandate of the local government of South Africa to serve the people of South Africa. A figure of more than two decades implies sufficient time to mature and take the reins. In this regard, De Visser (2005: 1) briefly notes that the South African Constitution unambiguously chooses to make local government the epicentre of development and gives it a strong institutional status. According to De Visser

(2005), it is important to take stock of the local government sphere of the country and its position in building a healthy and productive society.

As Maseremule (2020) puts it, participatory democracy in the form of urban growth means ‘the transfer of authority to the common people’. But this is not possible when parties place their partisan power interests above citizens’, as demonstrated by Tshwane’s paralysis when running basic services. Brooks (2020), from the Mapungubwe Institute for Strategic Reflection, while analysing the ANC’s interpretation of participatory democracy as a revolutionary movement first, then as a government after 1994, paints a bleak image of the democratic process that has gone wrong, despite its quest for a developmentally capable state at local government level. It seems that the failure of a state to implement effective local development government is blamed on lack of coherence and application of new ideas and influences that arise from development theory and debates on what constitutes governance and international best practice. This can be seen in various advisory mechanisms, such as ward committees and planning for municipal development. According to Brooks (2020), there is some tension between an opportunity to control the public sector and allowing people to participate effectively. But the public participation strategy of South Africa does allow for some common impact. Separately though, the ANC as a movement has moved away from a distinct discourse on participation since being in government. The adoption by the present government of a predominantly market-oriented economic strategy since 1994 inevitably made public participation dialogue useless at the policy level. Yet, despite its shortcomings in realising a local developmental government through a capable state, the attempt to improve continues. For Brooks (2020), the problem for South African democracy is simply the presence of vanguardism, which prevents the mobilisation of the people. A dominant party runs the state. There also exists what the political theorist Joseph V. Femia as quoted by Bond, Desai and Ngwane (2013: 136), said in *Marxism and Democracy*: a major conflict in Marxism between a desire for political power from above and common initiative from below. Brooks sums up the problem as a tension between avant-garde and participatory democracy, which keeps downplaying a delaying tactic in making the participatory democracy a reality of life in local government and all other spheres of government, in my opinion. It has been almost 26 years since the end of apartheid, and South Africa’s democracy has reached a critical point. Mass disillusionment with the new government and

the governing party, shortcomings in government performance and mass protest increases are evident. Yet the way participatory democracy is practised tends to affect both ideas and the operational practices of a developmentally capable state due to ongoing service delivery challenges bedeviling local government space. The new government has been found lacking as a nation member as agreed by both Brooks and Qobo. Rampant corruption and abuse of power have weakened the claim to rightful leadership of the people of South Africa. According to Brooks and Qobo, it becomes obvious and unavoidable that people will lose confidence in established democratic processes, hence the hamstrung municipalities in South Africa.

Maseremule (2020) agrees that developmental government should be based on the residents. The Greeks named this demo, meaning ‘collectively, the body of people.’ Sometimes, political parties rob democracy of its essential aspect. Thankfully, Maseremule agrees with the results of this paper: South Africa’s electoral structure already offers the foundation for situating local government among the citizens. A cities are divided into wards for local elections, and in practice, the elected representatives for the municipal councils are not active, and the rights represented by him or her not clearly exercised due to poor participation by councillors. Many such councillors stand as independents. This arrangement for independent representation is not ideal because such a ward candidate may be a political party representative. Yet this can be overcome by having people directly nominate most candidates. According to Maseremule, a ward candidate should be the ward residents’ nominee and be accountable directly to them. Ideally, all -or most - council seats should be filled by ward members. This will ensure the city leadership is made up of ‘public society members’.

It has also been noted and supported by the Daily Maverick statement that the annual reports of the Auditor-General (AGSA) on local government have, for many years, expressed the bleak and deteriorating condition of South African municipalities. The National Treasury also expressed its consternation at the lack of governance and financial control in the municipalities and the metro. One has to ask the citizens of most South African towns and cities whether they get value for their property rates and taxes compared to a decade ago. I do not doubt that their response will express a collective frustration at the deterioration in water quality and wastewater facilities, potholed highways, collapsing electricity distribution networks, inadequate management of refuse and deteriorating

financial discipline. If the average citizen pondered on the presence of a local government body that would need to be organised to reflect and assist with municipal management and efficiency, they would be forgiven for assuming that there is no such organisation.

The key problem about free basic services is, among other things, the lack of appropriate infrastructure, especially in rural municipalities. Municipalities in urban areas can provide services, as most have sewage, power, water, and waste treatment systems in place. This challenge, however, goes beyond the sole capacity and powers of most municipalities, especially the local municipality. The study shows that some jurisdictions regarded the shortage of public infrastructure as one of the biggest problems facing communities. Further work will help decide what needs to be done to solve this problem successfully. This paper may also expose concerns about unemployment, which has been seen as a contributing factor to the difficulties faced by local institutions in providing services. In response to the question on what could be done to alleviate service delivery problems facing South African municipalities, some respondents said that municipalities should create an atmosphere conducive to the development of jobs. A significantly higher percentage of municipalities said job creation was a major factor in response to how they viewed the service delivery problems faced by their local municipality. Thus, it is obvious that unemployment is of great concern.

Corruption in South African municipalities, particularly in most provinces, is a major problem that cripples the desire for development-friendly local governments, some of which have little capacity to generate income. It is assumed that both politicians and managers are crooked. Corruption is prevalent when awarding tenders and appointing employees. In response to the query about the key causes of service delivery problems, corruption was identified by 30% of municipalities. For problems facing public service delivery to be tackled effectively, corruption must be curbed immediately. It would also be useful to conduct further research into other areas relating to service provision.

Among other findings is that all successful organisations require good leadership in the Batho Pele Principles ([www.kznhealth.gov.za/bathopele.htm](http://www.kznhealth.gov.za/bathopele.htm)). Pretorius and Schurink (2007: 23) [quoting a research participant] make the following points about staff training and development: 'In leadership, people who are skilled have the expertise, are capable and confident, and have a vision, so that

in return, people who are recruited to the organisation have the necessary skills, necessary expertise, and they share in the values of the organisation.' According to the African National Congress (ANC), the failure to properly implement a cadre deployment policy has contributed to the organisation's current challenges and weaknesses. To that end, the ANC's 4th National Policy Conference reaffirmed that a 'contingent of cadres should be produced who are competent, committed, disciplined, and conscientious' (ANC 2012: 3). It was suggested that the basis of 'deployment' should be intellectual, academic, and ethical training and political preparation. The conference also agreed that before cadres are elected or appointed to leadership posts, their performance should be closely watched and evaluated. According to the report, academic qualifications should be an important aspect of cadre deployment (ANC 2012: 3). Despite the ruling party's judgments and suggestions, little has changed, and the consequences for local government and, more specifically, service delivery have been terrible. The protests against poor service delivery have persisted unabated, and the outcomes of the 2016 local government elections may have served as a wake-up call for the ruling party.

According to Reddy (2016), the South African local governance system can be described as 'world-class' internationally if judged by the legislative and policy framework; however, to complement that framework, the necessary human and financial resources must be committed to municipal structures and ensuring that the system works. Reddy further emphasises that individuals in charge of municipal functionary political deployment must consider the enthusiasm, commitment, competence, qualifications, and ethical leadership of those in line to be appointed or elected. ANC 'deployees' will play a key role in devising and executing service delivery and development; therefore, having 'struggle credentials' is not enough. The essence of developing local government, as well as a constitutional need, is delivery. In the end, the concept of 'cadre deployment' and political patronage should be abandoned since it undermines the fundamental principles of good local governance.

## **7. Conclusion**

In light of the above, this paper argues that the idea of South Africa's building of a capable state through developmental local government is indeed a short drive

from the fog into the light— it is possible. It is hoped that the results of this paper will encourage good local governance and participatory democratic governance and bring to light the vision of a growing and competent state and other sectors of South African government to resolve the service delivery challenges they face. Its recommendations could help improve the delivery of service to the communities. However, a common claim by the governing ANC in South Africa appears to be false: its commitment to participatory democracy, involving citizens in decisions on issues affecting their lives. It is a principle that has been greatly compromised by a system that has been institutionalised alongside representative democratic government; primarily at the local government level. Participatory democracy in the post-apartheid local government sphere is widely perceived to have collapsed. Two areas of concern are the institutionalised structures and the development of informal networks, such as protests. Despite these protests, citizens still lack any influence in governance processes.

## **8. Recommendations**

The findings of various consulted documents offered several suggestions for tackling service delivery challenges facing South African municipalities. Community participation is typically achieved by ward commissions, ward councillors, and public meetings. If the municipalities were to commit to participatory, democratic good governance, local needs would inform municipal planning and programmes. Groups feel isolated and detached from decision-making processes and are often stripped of authority. Participatory engagement by citizens is believed to increase the perceived legitimacy of a municipality. Therefore, it is recommended that municipalities set up/strengthen and train ward committees to connect them and the communities they represent to ensure that communities are actively engaged in service delivery projects. It is common knowledge that South African municipalities are characterised by conflicts between politicians and senior office bearers. There is considerable confusion about the responsibilities and roles of the mayor's office and the City Manager's office. A further challenge is that municipal officials cannot divorce party politics from the municipal government. Some officials become involved in administrative affairs, irrespective of the city manager being the municipality's legal accounting officer. Therefore, it is recommended that these two essential municipal components be harmonised.

There are also common perceptions that most municipalities are corrupt, especially when awarding tenders. Many municipalities and agencies ignore processes for granting tenders, in particular grant-related contracts for public services. Municipal tenders are assumed to be awarded to family members, associates, or those related to local officials or senior politicians. On an international scale, these views negatively impact the image and reputation of South African municipalities. Business investment is thus potentially harmed. The clarion call is for a local government free of corruption at every level.

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# Reflecting on the past, present, and future of social security systems in Africa with specific reference to selected countries

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## Abstract

The concept of social security is not a new phenomenon in Africa. Before the introduction of formal social security systems, local communities had their unique traditional ways of protecting their members from the hazards and vicissitude of life. This paper provides an overview of social security in Africa. Arguably, high unemployment in the region has contributed to the rise of the informal sector. Nevertheless, this sector has been precluded from the existing formal social security arrangements. Through an extensive and systematic review of literature on social security, it was established that existing formal social security systems in Africa are fragmented and lack inclusivity. The findings revealed that most of the population is excluded from formal social security schemes because they work in the informal sector. However, the existing formal social security schemes are generally labour-centred and state-regulated. The recommendations include transforming existing social security measures to include the informal sector and other vulnerable groups. The social security narrative needs to be revisited in light of the low coverage. There is a need to integrate and synchronise existing formal social security strategies with traditional social security arrangements in the region.

**Keywords:** Social security; social insurance; social assistance; voluntary insurance; social security reform

## 1. Introduction

Recently, interest in social security has grown rapidly in many countries in Africa. The need for social protection has become one of the most pressing issues in the region. A stable job with a reasonable income is the strongest form of social security and, consequently, an effective means to alleviate poverty, deprivation and vulnerability (Chitonge 2012: 13). The link between formal wage employment and participation in a formal social security scheme is common in developing countries (Anifalaje 2016: 8). Paradoxically, unemployment is high in many African countries. According to Bailey and Turner (2002: 106), approximately 75% of the labour force in Africa works outside the formal economy, often in subsistence agriculture. However, according to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), approximately 80% of the world's population has no access to formal social security, and in Africa, more than 90% of the population is not covered under any social security scheme. The paper provides the rationale for reviewing existing social security arrangements, considering the changing political and socio-economic environment.

The paper is anchored in positive theories of social security. The focus is on the sustainability of social security programmes. Positive theories include political and efficiency theories of social security, amongst others. Theories of social security explain why social security exists and the social, economic, and political forces that create these programmes, keep these in place and enable their growth (Mulligan and Sala-i-Martin 1999: 2). A comprehensive and systematic literature review was conducted to assess the historical development of social security systems in selected African countries. Relevant literature was reviewed to establish deficiencies in existing social security systems in Africa. An understanding of the reform agenda can be achieved by analysing the historical development of social security in Africa, a region where most people live in conditions of social insecurity (Von Braun 2011: 1). It should be accentuated that social security should not be perceived as a privilege but a requirement and a basic human right.

The paper makes two major contributions to the existing body of knowledge. Firstly, it highlights the irony surrounding social security in Africa. Extending social security coverage to the poor remains a huge challenge in most countries. Secondly, it provides recommendations to extend social security coverage to those

population groups excluded either by design or default. Holzmann, Sherburne-Benz and Tesliuc (2003: 1) assert that providing the needed social security most effectively requires a different and fresh look at the existing programmes and instruments.

The next section of this paper provides the background to the study, followed by the conceptual and theoretical frameworks, respectively. This is followed by a description of the methodology adopted in the study, the findings and the conclusion.

## 2. Background to the problem

Recent studies have revealed that large population groups in African countries have no social security cover while the benefits for those who do have, are inadequate (Van Ginneken 2003: 278; Smit and Mpedi 2010: 2). Extending social security coverage would require delinking such benefits from employment-based and creating institutions to include excluded groups (Anifalage 2016). The United Nations (UN) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) classify social security as a basic human right. According to Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Article 9 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, social security is a fundamental human right. Suffice it to say that every person is entitled to some form of social security cover; hence, the need for universal social security coverage.

Since its launch in 1919, ILO has kept social security at the core of its mandate. To promote uniformity of the conceptualisation of social security, the ILO (2000: 29) provides the following definition:

Social security is the protection that society provides for its members, through a series of public measures, against the economic and social distress that otherwise will be caused by the stoppage or substantial reduction of earnings resulting from sickness, maternity leave, being injured on duty, unemployment, old age, and death; the provision of medical care; and the provision of subsidies for families and children.

Although there is inclusivity in this definition, member states' practical interpretation and intervention strategies still reflect the exclusionist orientation

to protect persons in formal employment and thereby negate those in the informal sector. It can be argued that the ILO's reference to 'income from work' has largely been interpreted to imply people's salaries and wages from formal employment (Smit and Mpedi 2010: 1). Formal social security systems are generally based on a labour-centred view founded on formal employment, including employment contracts (Maes 2003: 39). The challenges associated with developed and developing countries are relatively different. Consequently, there is a need for a definition of social security that encompasses formal and informal social security arrangements to dispense with the current perception. An Afrocentric definition that reflects the reality of social security in Africa is required. It has to be broader in scope incorporate various segments of African communities and their unique needs.

It should be noted that before colonisation, Africans lived in small communities in specific geographical areas characterised by ethnicity. Ouma (1995: 5) argues that these homogenous groups knew each other well. The high-level intimacy of family and extended family networks resulted in social cohesion, solidarity and togetherness. Thus, traditional social security arrangements were implemented to assist the needy, for example, the elderly and sick.

Nonetheless, it can be argued that social cohesion and mutual-aid assistance programmes were gradually weakened by the emergence of a market-based economy introduced by the colonial administration (Devereux 2013: 14). Eventually, a society characterised by individualism emerged. Such developments had far-reaching implications on the kind and level of social security provision for local communities as the significance of collective support towards one another started waning. Like in western countries, the provision of social security gradually became the government's responsibility and was supported by relevant policies and legislation. Several scholars concur that the concept of formal social security based on the perception that the state is the prime provider and protector of citizens originated from the West, particularly Germany (Kotlikoff 2011: 415; Devereux 2013: 15). This assertion draws heavily on experiences from Western Europe, particularly during the post-World War II era.

Social security has become a central subject of discussion in academia and policy debates in the region and beyond. Social security systems enable societies to advance their well-being by protecting them from vulnerability and deprivation. According to Holzmann et al. (2003: 1), assisting individuals,

households and communities to manage various risks is needed to accelerate a reduction in poverty and sustained economic and human development. As a region, Africa is characterised by high poverty, vulnerability and deprivation (Maes 2003: 41). Chitonge (2012: 1) argues that the provision of social security in many African countries remains constrained by the lack of political will and policies that endeavour to replicate developed countries social welfare regimes.

Research has revealed that models of social security from developed countries have progressively failed to address issues of poverty, vulnerability and deprivation in developing countries. Holzmann et al. (2003: 1) assert that simply copying with public and funded programmes by wealthy countries in many instances will not achieve the intended objectives of developing countries. It should be noted that the political, economic, social and cultural environments are diverse. Hence, there is a need to adapt the programmes and policies from the West to suit the local context.

### **3. Conceptual framework**

As a concept, formal social security has its roots in western society. Resultantly, most of the social security schemes adopted by African governments have been fashioned according to foreign models without considering the unique needs of local communities (Bailey and Turner 2002: 105; Anifalaje 2016: 8). Thus, Africa's formal social security systems have roots in colonial government systems. It is important to emphasise certain traditional social security arrangements in the region prior to colonisation. Local communities protected individuals or social groups against social risks.

Owing to various factors, including the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS, poverty, and internal armed conflicts, some African countries do not have a functional social security system (Bailey and Turner 2002: 105). Natural crises have also exposed weaknesses inherent in social security policies. One can argue that the challenges that social security faces, particularly during crises, provide social security reform and enhancement opportunities. Progressive governments are periodically obliged to review their countries' social security arrangements to establish their relevance to the emerging social and economic challenges. Thus, governments should be concerned with the development of appropriate intervention strategies.

The existing body of knowledge highlights that contemporary societies acknowledge that social security mechanisms are crucial to a country's social and economic development. Social security promotes social justice, given that there will be the protection of the poor and vulnerable. However, although a noble idea, extending formal social security to cover the informal sector has not been an easy initiative due to the lack of resources and the nature of existing social security schemes, some of which are contribution-based.

#### **4. Theoretical framework**

The first country to introduce the social security we have become accustomed to was Germany under the leadership of Otto Von Bismarck. Welfare programmes were introduced in 1881, followed by old-age pensions in 1889 (Kotlikoff 2011; Devereux 2013: 15). Ever since social security schemes have been escalating globally. During the Great Depression, it became apparent that there was a need to protect people from economic malaise. According to Bailey (2004), different social policy trajectories are evident among African countries despite many commonalities. Since traditional forms of social security had been destroyed by capitalism, certain community segments became vulnerable to economic distresses. Kaseke (2010: 162) asserts that social security plays a significant role in inhibiting and alleviating poverty. One can argue that the livelihood of an individual receiving a social grant, for example, is likely to improve due to the means-tested stipends. Social security strategies have been evolving over the years due to the changing needs of the people. The transitioning of social security strategies can be discussed under the pre-colonial era, colonial, and post-colonial era.

##### **4.1. Pre-colonial era**

In pre-colonial Africa, people lived in mutual community support networks extended family and clan groups (Bukuluki and Mubiru 2014: 34). As alluded to previously, mutual-aid assistance was common among community members. For example, in Uganda and elsewhere in Africa, traditional social security systems were prominent before introducing formal social security for those in formal employment (Kasente, Asingwire, Banugire and Kyomuhendo 2002: 163). These

social security systems can be grouped into household-based and organisation-based systems. According to Maes (2003: 45), the household-based systems relied on kinship or family ties while organisation-based systems depended on social services provided by cultural associations, churches, voluntary organisations, non-governmental organisations and mutual benefit societies. Thus, social security was imbedded with cultural norms and values in the pre-colonial era. Bukuluki and Mubiru (2014: 34) argue that the pre-colonial period focused on solidarity and the provision of assistance to those in clans and communities who were unable to take care of themselves. It can be inferred that those in need relied on mutual-aid assistance and reciprocity during this period.

#### **4.2. Colonial era**

During the colonial era, some men left their rural homes searching for employment opportunities in towns and cities. The rural to urban migration further eroded traditional African social security strategies that existed from time immemorial. Kyomuhendo, cited in Millard (2008), summarises this observation by asserting that the emergence of urban commerce and formal employment led to labour mobility and subsequent disintegration of kinship and extended family systems. However, over the years, the traditional social security strategies have undergone changes that have modified how these cushion the poor from economic shocks, weakened this support or ceased to exist altogether (Bukuluki and Mubiru 2014: 34). Although traditional social security mechanisms have been weakened and diminished in terms of effectiveness, they still exist in certain traditional societies. For example, traditional social security mechanisms in Uganda remain the primary form of support, especially in the countryside (Bukuluki and Mubiru 2014: 35).

Under colonial rule, western social security models were exported across to Africa, Asia and Latin America by European administrators (Devereux 2013: 15). In Africa, it was implemented to cater to expatriate workers' needs. According to Bukuluki and Mubiru (2014: 36), its laws were formulated in consonance with colonisation and colonial policy interests and objectives. Kaseke (2003: 37) argues that exclusion from social security schemes during the colonial era can be attributed to the colonial policy of racial discrimination adopted by successive colonial governments. No serious attempt was made to provide social assistance

to the black majority during the colonial era. Governments in Africa had to find ways to transform the discriminatory policies to accommodate other segments of their communities deliberately excluded from social security schemes borrowed from their former colonial masters.

### **4.3. Post-colonial era**

The post-colonial era saw efforts towards improving social security systems by the newly established governments. As African states and political systems began to mature, formal social welfare systems grew gradually. In an attempt to achieve social and economic justice, new legislation was enacted, and others amended to incorporate social security soon after independence. With specific reference to Zimbabwe, Masuka (2014: 36) argues that the inclusion of a section on social security in Zimbabwe's new constitution is indicative of the government's commitment to enhance the people's livelihoods. However, the post-colonial state has been cautious in its approach to social security and has not built a long-term social contract with society. According to Olivier (2009: 39), when measured against general and international standards, the development of social security systems in Africa is at different stages ranging from, for example, the fairly well-developed (Mauritius), developing or transitional (South Africa and Namibia) to the underdeveloped (Malawi). However, apart from the huge diversity in the different systems, coverage is generally low and characterised by inadequate benefits, which impacts livelihoods.

### **4.4. Social exclusion**

Social exclusion is prevalent in most countries in the region. Most social security systems are fragmented and do not encourage the transfer of benefits from one scheme to the other. Anifalaje (2017: 416) observes that the right to social security in Nigeria remains 'illusory to a large majority of the citizenry as social security laws are targeted mostly at workers in the formal sector of the economy'. In South Africa, those not in formal employment are excluded from pensions and provident funds. Thus, like elsewhere in the region, the problem of social exclusion is also prevalent in South Africa. The self-employed or those employed in the informal sector must make their own social security arrangements (Millard

2008: 41).

Unlike in South Africa, where the constitution stipulates that everyone has the right to access social security, the situation in Malawi is different. According to Kanyongolo, cited in Millard (2008: 45), certain provisions deal with selected aspects of social security. For example, the Malawian constitution is silent on the right to social security. Some people may be excluded from social security arrangements without the much-needed legal provision since there will be no legal basis for compliance.

#### **4.5. Social security pillars**

Social security can be categorised into formal and informal social security systems. Formal social security is a regulated mechanism of protecting citizens against social contingencies comprising three tiers (i.e. social security pillars), namely: social assistance, social insurance and voluntary insurance (2003: 25), while informal social security strategies focus on informal forms of social security (Maes 2003: 39) usually based on Ubuntu, family and community ties. Below, each pillar is discussed briefly.

##### **4.5.1. Social assistance**

The first pillar comprises social assistance, which is a state-funded system. It is non-contributory and financed exclusively from government revenue. Social assistance provides support in cash or kind to persons who lack the means to support themselves and their dependents. Hence, it is also known as public assistance or welfare assistance (Kaseke 1997: 40). The South African Constitution, 1996, provides social assistance for persons without any income. Section 27-(1)-(c) of the constitution protects the right of all citizens to access social security and appropriate social assistance if they are unable to support themselves and their dependents as such social assistance provides a safety net for the most vulnerable members of the community. Chitonge (2012: 2) argues that where they exist, social assistance programmes have often remained at the pilot stage, reaching only a small percentage of the eligible population, except in middle-income countries such as Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa (Bailey and Turner 2002: 112).

The social assistance provided to individuals either in cash or in-kind enables the beneficiaries to meet their basic needs. Social assistance is critical to alleviate poverty and limit inequality. According to Dhemba (1999: 6), although poverty alleviation occupies a topmost position on the development agenda of many developing countries, it remains a common problem. In line with this school of thought, needy South Africans have benefited directly from the government since 2006 in social grants. This scheme is meant to safeguard households against chronic and transient poverty. Another African country actively involved in social assistance is Kenya, through cash transfer programmes, food distribution and school feeding programmes and grants for those with severe disabilities and safe motherhood health vouchers (Dau 2003). These forms of social security are crucial requirements for people to survive. Access to social assistance saves the poor and marginalised community members from destitution.

In South Africa, social security covers contingencies such as maternity, pension and provident benefits, illness, injuries, family and survivors benefits (Kaseke 2010). It can be argued that social assistance in Africa is open to every citizen, and the onus rests on the individuals to prove that they are indeed vulnerable and are in dire need of government assistance. The question that begs a response is: how sustainable is the social assistance strategy given the lack of financial resources prevalent in Africa? .

#### **4.5.2. Social insurance**

Unlike social assistance, social insurance is a contribution-based form of social security designed to protect income earners and their dependants against a reduction or loss of income as a result of exposure to risks, thereby emphasising protecting persons employed in the formal sector (Kaseke 2003: 33; Smit and Mpedi 2010: 1). As highlighted earlier, social insurance had been the narrowest continuum for social security borrowed from the West, characterised by elements of social exclusivity because it covers only the formally employed. Owing to the nature of social insurance, in most countries, contributory schemes cover a small section of the population and tend to neglect the poor, particularly those without formal employment opportunities (Chitonge 2012: 2; Von Braun 2011). It should be noted that 'contributions to a social insurance fund can either be a flat rate or earnings rated and similarly the benefits can either be flat-rate or

graduated according to contributions' (Kaseke 1997: 41). In the case of Rwanda, social security programmes cover approximately 8% of the active population. It is infelicitous to have more than 90% of the active population excluded from benefiting part of their fundamental rights (Rwanda Civil Society Platform, 2013). It can be deduced that social insurance thrives with growing employment opportunities.

### **4.5.3. *Voluntary insurance***

Voluntary insurance is also referred to as supplemental insurance. It is a collective investment fund. Simply put, voluntary or supplemental insurance helps people protect their financial well-being in the advent of an accident or illness. It offers a way to stay ahead of the medical and out-of-pocket expenses not covered by major medical insurances. Apart from emergency treatment and transport costs to receive care and/or medication, voluntary insurance pays cash benefits directly to the policyholder, and the policyholder decides how or when to utilise the money. According to Dau (2003: 27), at the moment, voluntary schemes are not highly developed as yet in countries such as Tanzania and Uganda but well-developed in Kenya. People are required to subscribe voluntarily to the scheme; however, sustaining their membership if they are unemployed could be a huge challenge. Maes (2003: 53) suggests that to provide potential candidates with the opportunity to join voluntary social security arrangements, formalities should be simple enough for the excluded informal sector workers to understand. Secondly, the social security systems should be affordable, and thirdly, administrative offices should be within close proximity so that members do not have to travel long distances to pay premiums

### **4.6. *Overview of social security challenges***

The provisioning of social security has notable challenges. The lack of a reliable social security system in Zambia resulted in delays of remittances and poor investment decisions (Mukuka, Kalikiti and Musenge 2002). For the last three decades, returns from social security investments have been negative, and the losses passed on to members of the affected schemes. The current pension schemes have not fully addressed the health and other social needs of those who

fall in the vulnerable category soon after employment (Republic of Zambia 2006). Mthethwa (2014: 79) argues that the mismanagement of social security schemes in Africa is a source of distrust in such institutions. Owing to numerous economic and political challenges, exclusion from social security coverage remains rife in the post-colonial era, yet workers and prospective workers alike have been marginalised and are in great need of social security more than ever before (Nhede 2014: 113).

It has been argued that colonial governments provided social security essentially for the expatriate community, which eventually excluded the indigenous communities from accessing social security (Bukuluki and Mubiru 2014: 36). Poor economic performance in Africa led to high unemployment, resulting in increased growth of the informal sector. For example, in Rwanda, many people work in the informal sector, where their lives are defined by instability, poverty and risk (Rwanda Civil Society Platform). With regard to unemployment, Kaseke (1997: 39) notes that 'developing countries suffer from serious problems of unemployment.' Consequently, governments are faced with the ability to provide adequate social assistance in areas such as health, education and housing. The situation has also been exacerbated by corruption and mismanagement of the limited resources. Kalula and Carolus, cited in Kaseke (2010), argue that corruption and maladministration are some of the major problems bedevilling social assistance in South Africa. Corruption and maladministration of social assistance result in the denial of social security benefits to the poor and most vulnerable community members.

As a result of escalating unemployment, social insurance remains exclusionary, and the need for social assistance continues to rise, thereby placing strain on the national fiscus. Many workers in the informal sector are reluctant to contribute towards social security benefits that do not meet their prioritised needs (Maes 2003: 39). In order to address the exclusionary nature of social insurance, Dhemba (2012: 821) argues that there was a need to extend these schemes to the self-employed and informal sector workers. The adoption of policies that promote economic growth in the region should create the much-needed employment opportunities, translating into increased membership for social insurance schemes (Dhemba 2012: 821).

According to Mchomvu et al. (2002: 27), conventional social security programmes in Tanzania only cover a relatively limited proportion of the

population and have not reached the urban and rural poor as yet. Similarly, in Zimbabwe, social exclusion is widespread. Social security schemes in Zimbabwe are exclusionary, and the exclusion problem dates back to the colonial era. During this period, social security was deliberately made exclusionary on race, which resulted in the marginalisation of the African population. However, today's low coverage is due to existing social security arrangements that do not cover persons in the informal sector (Kaseke 2003: 46). The current pension scheme only covers workers in formal employment. Both employers and employees contribute towards the pension scheme. The mandatory monthly social security contributions are meant to provide a pension upon retirement. For people to willingly contribute towards social insurance, communities need to have confidence in their governments. In the absence of trust, employers and employees connive to evade remitting their monthly contributions. Failure to trust the government with their funds has induced the informal sector workers to create their own safety nets (Maes 2003: 39).

It is a reality that unemployment is on the rise and contributes to the growth of the informal sector of the economy. According to Sparks and Barnett (2010: 2), informal sector employment in Uganda and Kenya now exceeds employment in the formal sector, and nearly 90% of the labour force in Ghana comes from the informal sector. However, the informal sector cannot join social insurance schemes voluntarily when there are allegations of abuse and mismanagement of public resources. Furthermore, legal restrictions, such as excluding several categories of employees and administrative and financial problems, are primarily responsible for the low coverage rate in Africa (Maes 2003: 39; Olivier 2005: 5).

## **5. Results and analysis**

The paper adopted a qualitative approach, utilising a comprehensive and systematic literature review and document analysis as data collection strategies. The official documents included reports by international organisations such as the UN, the ILO, the UDHR, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. These documents focusing on the rights of citizens to social security as well as social security policies of selected African countries constituted the major sources of data required for this paper. Theoretical sampling was employed to gather relevant data from various secondary sources

such as books and journal articles focusing on specific countries in the region. This paper examined previous and current social security strategies intending to keep them in tandem with the changing demographics, including the political and socio-economic environment. Trends and patterns were established, which led to the findings and conclusions. This study followed a descriptive approach to highlight the inadequacies of current social security systems.

The following were the findings of this paper based on a comprehensive and systematic literature review and document analysis. Firstly, it was established that social security coverage in most countries in the region is pathetically low, and some do not meet the criteria set by the ILO. The reviewed literature revealed that social security schemes in Rwanda, Zimbabwe, and many African countries only cover a small portion of the population. Thus, it can be inferred that there are no reliable social security systems in the region due to low coverage. The lack of reliable social security systems leaves many vulnerable to economic fluctuations and social contingencies. The ILO prescribes that the people should feel secure under any social security scheme is not possible if a country's social security system is unreliable and provides inadequate benefits.

Secondly, the study revealed that there is high unemployment in the region. The conventional social security system has unquestionably not been very successful in providing social security coverage to the local communities. Existing social security systems cover those in formal employment, and as a result of the scarcity of jobs, many people in Africa work in the informal sector. Notwithstanding that social security is a basic human right, it is only enjoyed by a minority of the region's population. In most instances, it is the self-employed, domestic, and casual workers who are excluded from formal social security arrangements largely due to administrative and financial challenges. It can be argued that failure to extend social security to the informal sector worsens inequality and inhibits much-needed economic growth.

Urgent and targeted action needs to be undertaken by governments to expand social security coverage. However, it should be noted that extending social security to cover the excluded population groups requires a systematic study of past and current intervention strategies. An effective and efficient social security system can significantly change the livelihoods of the marginalised and vulnerable. Change in demographics, political and socio-economic circumstances have far-reaching implications on Africa's nature and scope of social security provision. It

can be argued that the welfare of the people depends on social security. Hence, the region's social security strategies should be reviewed regularly to retain relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability.

Thirdly, the study revealed that officials involved in the administration of social insurance schemes have been abusing social security funds. The abuse of public funds and poor governance has resulted in governments losing public trust. The loss of public trust has harmed the remittance of contributions towards social security schemes. Trust is also required by the public, especially those who fear that the government could raid their contributions to pay for general public expenditures. Poor investment decision-making and maladministration have tainted the image of certain organisations involved in the administration of social security funds. On the one hand, such circumstances have given rise to the temptation to evade remitting contributions to the responsible authorities. On the other hand, extending social security coverage to the informal sector has not been easy. The informal sector has been reluctant to participate in formal social security programmes because they feared that their contributions would be abused.

Fourthly, the failure by the government to address corruption and abuse of scarce financial resources demonstrates a lack of political will. Allocating a negligible budget to social security schemes has also been cited by contemporary scholars as another indication of the lack of commitment by certain governments to implement effective social security systems.

## **6. Universal Social Security: a discussion**

Studies focusing on social security highlight several limitations of formal contribution-based schemes in countries such as Zambia, Zimbabwe, Uganda, to mention only a few. Researchers have been writing about the global perspective of social security and probable strategies to enhance existing social security systems in recent years. Focusing on emerging trends and options to extend social security coverage to the informal sector, governments can adapt to those policies exported from the West to develop their own unique social security arrangements and consider probable constraints. A comparative analysis of the various social security systems revealed establishing what works under a similar political, economic and socio-cultural environment. The right to social

security should be enshrined in the national constitution of a country for it to be enforceable. However, Smit and Mpedi (2010: 19) note that the right to social security does not always translate into access for the most vulnerable. It has been observed that several countries in the region are making concerted efforts to extend social security coverage to the informal sector, but much still needs to be done to achieve inclusivity and adequacy of social security benefits. Unless existing social security systems are reformed, the region will face a bleak future because most will remain marginalised and vulnerable to economic and social contingencies.

In recognition of the significance of universal social security coverage, the Tanzanian informal sector has developed tailor-made social security schemes for their unique situation and circumstances. People in the informal sector of the economy should be encouraged to make decisions on social security issues pertinent to this sector. Governments need to support the informal sector's alternative social security arrangements with appropriate pieces of legislation. As a show of commitment to universal social security coverage, the introduction of new legislation aimed at promoting inclusiveness should be prioritised. Institutions involved in the management of public funds should be transparent and trustworthy to earn public trust and lure the self-employed into joining formal social security arrangements.

Governments must deviate from the notion that social security intervention strategies should focus only on those in the formal economy sector. Instead, the focus should be on adopting hybrid social security systems to advocate both contribution-based and non-contribution-based schemes. In order to achieve social justice, governments should implement a means-tested or universal social pension scheme for persons above the age of 60 years, which is funded from general government revenues. The integration and synchronisation of existing social security arrangements are necessary. Society should not underestimate the significance of informal social security systems; instead, they should perceive these as the foundation for universal social security coverage.

African countries must revise their priorities and attach greater significance to universal social security coverage. There is a need to improve the management of scarce resources in order for governments to meet their social security obligations with limited resources. There should be evidence of fairness and transparency when social security funds are managed. Thus, persons involved in

administering social security funds should exercise good governance and be held accountable for their decisions. They should ensure that limited resources are utilised to enhance people's lives. Any investment decisions should be aimed at the benefit of the intended persons.

It is the role of a government to create a favourable environment that enables people in the informal sector to join and participate in the formalised contribution-based social security schemes. There is a need to introduce and regulate voluntary membership to existing contributory social security schemes. Governments may have to provide certain incentives for the informal sector participation in the formalised social security schemes.

It should be noted that certain countries in the region have not yet extended social security to include the various contingencies stipulated by ILO, for example, maternity leave. Historically, women have been subjected to gender discrimination, and as a consequence, progressive governments should introduce appropriate social security programmes to meet the needs of women. Instances in which persons in the informal sector have their own contribution-based social security arrangements, the institutions involved in the collection thereof should be strengthened through legislation. Office bearers at these informal institutions require proper training to enable them to play their roles in providing effective and efficient social security.

## **7. Conclusion**

The paper outlined the historical development of social security systems in selected countries in Africa and highlighted the need to reform social security systems. The findings revealed no comprehensive social security systems in some countries within Africa. Consequently, governments have to contend with several challenges. From the reviewed literature, it can be concluded that the future of social security in Africa depends on transforming existing social security arrangements. Currently, it is not integrated, lacks inclusivity and is largely fragmented. Governments should develop various strategies and approaches that can accommodate persons in the economy's informal sector into tailor-made social security systems. The strengths and weaknesses of family and community-based social security systems need to be explored further to blend these with the existing formal social security strategies. A fusion of social security strategies and

social development schools of thought contributes towards developing relevant, effective, efficient and sustainable social security systems.

Given the magnitude of social exclusion in many African countries, governments also need to learn how certain countries addressed this reality through a systematic comparison of the various intervention strategies. The governance, finance and administration of social security schemes in African countries need to be enhanced considerably. In light of the deficiencies highlighted in this paper, reforming social security systems in Africa is imperative to include vulnerable groups. Supporting and strengthening the participation of social partners in reforming social security systems is of cardinal importance.

There is a need to conduct thorough research on how social security coverage can be extended to vulnerable members of society if the region is to experience the emergence of a just and egalitarian populace. An efficient and effective social security system promotes social stability, cohesion, and social justice. Provision of the much-needed social security in the region requires an alternative perspective of the existing programmes and instruments. A carefully crafted and well-administered social security policy is a vehicle for economic development and prosperity. However, governments need to implement effective monitoring and evaluation structures.

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# The Zimbabwean Response to RENAMO Incursions: A Conflict Transformation Perspective

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## Abstract

The study analysed the Zimbabwean responses to the RENAMO incursions that have affected communities along the border. The analysis was done through the lens of John Paul Lederach's theory of Conflict Transformation. In particular, the study sought to gauge the effectiveness and sustainability of these methods employed by both the Zimbabwean community and the government. The recurrence of the violent incursions necessitated the study into the Zimbabwean border communities by the RENAMO rebels. It was also necessitated by the recurrence of hostilities between RENAMO and FRELIMO forces in Mozambique. The study was based on the case study of Chipinge in Manicaland, Zimbabwe. The community is located near the Zimbabwe-Mozambique border and is frequently affected by violent incursions whenever conflict breaks out in Mozambique. The research findings made it clear that the Zimbabwean responses to the RENAMO incursions have not been effective. The responses thus far have left the border communities vulnerable to further attacks from the rebels. However, these approaches are unsustainable from a Conflict transformation perspective. The approaches are short-sighted in outlook and have at best achieved a negative peace scenario. The study recommends Zimbabwe devise a conflict transformative approach that is long term in nature to stand against the RENAMO incursions effectively.

**Keywords:** Mozambique; Zimbabwe; Chipinge; RENAMO; Conflict-Transformation

## 1. Introduction

Zimbabwe faces the threat of RENAMO invasions through its eastern border, which it shares with Mozambique. The threat is more pronounced to the Zimbabwean communities located along the border. This assertion is based on the previous episodes of violence endured by Zimbabwean communities along the border. Thus, in an attempt to develop a sustainable peacebuilding model, it is important to analyse the initiatives taken by the Chipinge community and the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ). This model will then help address the violence of the RENAMO rebels and mitigate its effects on the Zimbabwean communities along the border. This model is made more urgent considering how unstable the political situation in Mozambique has proven itself to be over the years. Furthermore, the issues that led to this violence have not yet been fully addressed despite the two peace treaties that have been signed between the RENAMO rebels and the FRELIMO forces in 1992 and 2019, respectively. The flaws of these peace agreements raise the likelihood of further violence occurring between FRELIMO and RENAMO. As long as these tensions linger between the Mozambican parties, the Zimbabwean border communities remain at risk of further attacks hence the need to adopt a sustainable peacebuilding approach to mitigate the violence endured by the communities at the hands of the rebels.

## 2. RENAMO Incursions in Zimbabwe (1977-2016)

The Mozambican civil wars (1977–1992) (2013–2016) affected the Mozambican nationals and the Zimbabwean communities along the Zimbabwe-Mozambique border. Zimbabwean communities from Nyamapanda in the far north to Chiredzi in the south underwent a series of attacks, robberies, and murders from the RENAMO rebels, as illustrated on the map below:



**Figure 1: Hot spots of RENAMO incursions along Zimbabwe-Mozambique border**

RENAMO was initially created by the intelligence arm of the Rhodesian government under Ian Douglas Smith (1964-1979). It was used as an instrument to destabilise the newly independent state of Mozambique in 1975 (Wiegink 2015: 2; Osvaldo et al. 2013: 66; Hultman 2009: 825). However, following the fall of the Smith regime and the independence of Zimbabwe in April 1980, the patronage of RENAMO was undertaken by the South African Apartheid regime

under the BJ Vorster regime (Wiegink 2015: 3). South Africa used RENAMO as an instrument for its Destabilisation policy of newly independent African states such as Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Lesotho. The rationale behind the policy was that newly independent African states were allegedly harbouring South African nationalists, supporting and inspiring the struggle against Apartheid (Rupiya 1998: 13).

During the Mozambican civil war 1977-1992, the Zimbabwean communities along the border faced multiple incursions from the Mozambican RENAMO rebels. These incursions led to a loss of property and lives on both sides of the border. In Zimbabwe, for instance, RENAMO attacked the Mutare-Beira oil pipeline, Mutare-Beira-Maputo railway line, and road networks (Fearon & Laitin 2005: 9). In 1981 the bridge over the Pungwe river was bombed. Chicualacuala in Mozambique was also attacked, thereby blocking Zimbabwe's gateway to the sea. In November 1987, RENAMO rebels crossed the Zimbabwe-Mozambique boundary and attacked a workers' compound at Nyambuya Forestry Estate located along the border (Chimanikire 1999: 10). They destroyed property, and the workers were attacked with pangas, knives, and bayonets. Radios, watches, and food were stolen. Twenty people, mostly women, were kidnapped and were used as porters. Similar atrocities were committed in Chiredzi's Musumeki village of the Sengwe communal lands. According to Jennifer (1983: 4), four people were murdered, and four caterpillars belonging to the Ministry of Transport were set ablaze. In Ndali town, 71 km east of the Chiredzi town, six people were also murdered, a clinic was burnt down, two grinding mills and five stores were looted (*ibid*). The oil depot at Beira was blown up with US \$12 million worth of oil which could meet Zimbabwe's needs for 21 months (*ibid*). As a result, Zimbabweans had a bleak Christmas that year as they could not travel, cars were abandoned, factories were closed, and power cuts became the order of the day (*ibid*).

Following the Rome peace agreement of 1992, the incursions recurred between 2013 and 2016, and history repeated itself. Zimbabwe's communities along the border once again suffered. Cattle rustling and skirmishes were happening on the Zimbabwean-Mozambican boundary. Chiketo (2017) states that on 10 December 2016, a report from the Zimbabwean Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) confirmed that 15 RENAMO soldiers armed with AK47 rifles carried out the cattle raid of 50 cattle to feed the RENAMO fighters. According

to Jakwa (2017), the Mozambican soldiers had also participated in the raids. In Nyanga, Nyamutenha village, ward 11, also located along the Zimbabwe-Mozambique boundary, RENAMO soldiers were armed with bows and arrows, kidnapped four Zimbabweans, and stole an unspecified number of cattle. In the Nyamapanda area, residents were reported living in fear, and a police officer was shot dead.

Since 2016, the conflict has since subsided when the late former RENAMO leader Afonso Dhlakama declared a truce and engaged the Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi on the peace process. The peace process took almost three years and was eventually signed in August 2019 (Jentzsch 2019). Sadly, the agreement was signed 13 months after the untimely death of RENAMO leader Afonso Dhlakama due to a heart attack (Cowell 2018). Nevertheless, his successor Ossufo Momade stood in for him for the negotiations and eventual signing of the agreement. However, following the agreement, there was a split in the RENAMO party, with one faction led by Ossufo Momade and Mariano Nhongo leading the other faction (Klenfeld 2019). The new faction continues to threaten the resumption of hostilities and has perpetrated a few incidents of violence within Mozambique (ibid).

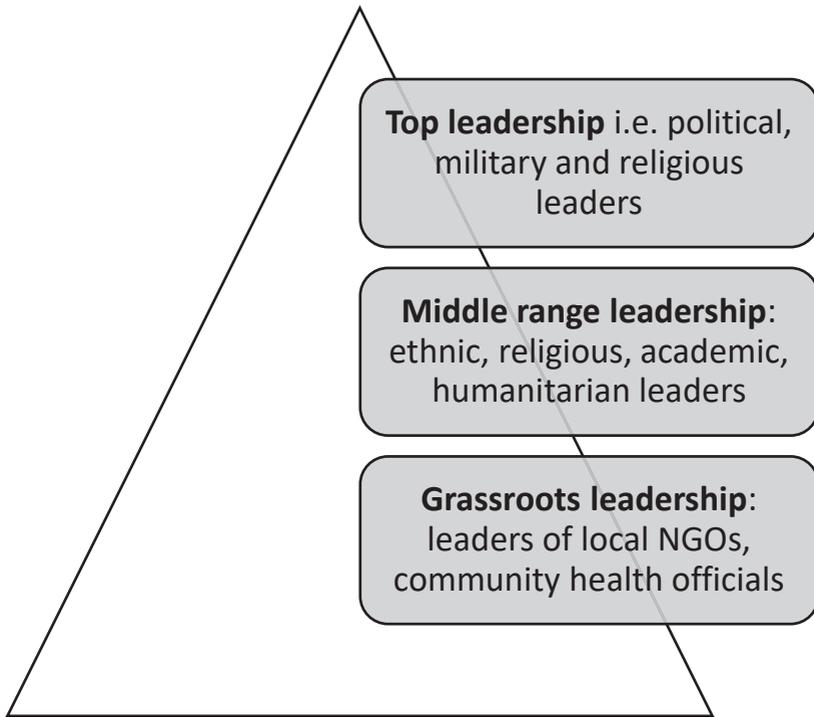
### **3. Conflict Transformation**

It is the latest in the line of peacebuilding models. It encapsulates the strengths of previous models such as conflict prevention, management and resolution. Conflict transformation goes a step further and tries to address the weaknesses of the same models. It is thus vital to note from the beginning that as a concept, conflict transformation is not entirely new; rather, it is a build-up from what has already been discovered by peace researchers and scholars. Ramsbotham et al. (2011: 9) stated that conflict transformation is the deepest level of the conflict resolution model rather than as a separate venture. Lederach (2004: 16), the founder of the conflict transformation model, also stated that conflict transformation's purpose is to add a voice to the ongoing discussion, search for greater understanding, and not minimise or degrade other interventions. Muchemwa (2015: 31–32) concurs with this line of thinking when he states that conflict transformation is not there to denigrate other existing conflict handling mechanisms. It is rather a synthesis; it does not compete but compliments them.

Lederach (2014: 16) defines conflict transformation as a peacebuilding model that views social conflict as a life-giving opportunity to create a constructive change process that reduces violence and increases justice in direct interaction and social structures. Paffenholz (2014: 13–14) adds that conflict transformation understands that conflict is a normal social occurrence. It transforms violent conduct into a peaceful one through a combination of multi-actor and multi-track approaches with short, medium and long-term perspectives. Francis (2002: 8) defines it as a method of peacebuilding that involves ensuring that subjects of domination discover and develop the power to participate in what affects them. Galtung (2007: 14) postulates that conflict transformation goes beyond the antagonists' goals and creates a new reality.

Conflict transformation is more of a long-term approach compared to conflict resolution. This is because conflict transformation aims to change cultures and structural systems, which take time to transform.

One key element of the conflict transformation model is that it prioritises the inclusion of the grassroots in the peace process. It seeks to empower the grassroots because imposed solutions to the conflict have a poor record of accomplishment. The subjects of domination have to participate in the process (Francis 2002: 8). Dube (2012: 300) informs that conflict transformation is multi-layered and includes multi-level participation and empowerment of the grassroots. It deals with past conflicts (hurts, injustices, traumas) to prevent future ones. However, conflict transformation does not include the grassroots at the expense of other stakeholders, e.g. traditional, local, national and international actors. It operates at multiple levels; it includes the grassroots and the political decision-makers and even development agencies. Lederach (1997: 39) depicts it as a pyramid with three levels, as shown in Fig 2.



**Figure 2: Lederach's Peacebuilding Pyramid.**

**Source:** Lederach (1997: 39)

The top level consists of the top leadership that is political, military and religious leaders. The middle level consists of local leaders, i.e. religious, academic and ethnic leaders. The third and broader base contains the grassroots leadership, i.e. local NGOs, community and health officials. To Lederach, the middle level of the local leaders is more important as they are the go-between the top and the grassroots leadership. This inclusivity is important because there will be a buy-in factor, ownership of the peace process by all those included in the peace process.

#### **4. Findings: Zimbabwe's Responses to RENAMO Incursions**

The research was guided by the interpretivism research philosophy, which advocates the researcher to directly engage the research participants and

understand their way of life.

The research design for this study was qualitative. This is because the study intended to collect in-depth information concerning how the Chipinge community has been affected by the RENAMO incursions and how best it can prepare to protect itself from the violence. This was done through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), structured observations and a collection of secondary data from books, journal articles, videos and internet sources. The interviews and discussions were done with local authorities, traditional leaders and community members of Chipinge.

The research focused on 38 participants as it was qualitative research. Eight of them were key informants i.e.

- Provincial Administrator Manicaland
- Chipinge-East Member of Parliament
- Chipinge Central Member of Parliament
- Chipinge District Administrator
- Chief Executive Officer of the Chipinge Rural District Council
- Chief of Gwenzi chieftaincy
- Chief of Mapungwana chieftaincy
- Commander of the army in Chipinge

Thirty of them were ordinary community members of the Chipinge-East community. These were divided into two-focus discussion groups; one for women and one for men purposively selected based on their knowledge and experiences with the RENAMO incursions.

#### **4.1. Community Initiatives**

Interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with the Manicaland government officials and Chipinge community members (July 2019-January 2020). The participants stated that the Chipinge community did not take any initiatives to address the RENAMO incursions. The best they did was approach other community members when the RENAMO rebels sent letters demanding food items from the community or simply fled into the nearby bushes. Chief Gwenzi of Gwenzi village (66km east of Chipinge town) stated that they did this at night and would then return to their respective homes during the day to get fresh supplies and check if any valuable items had been stolen or damage is done

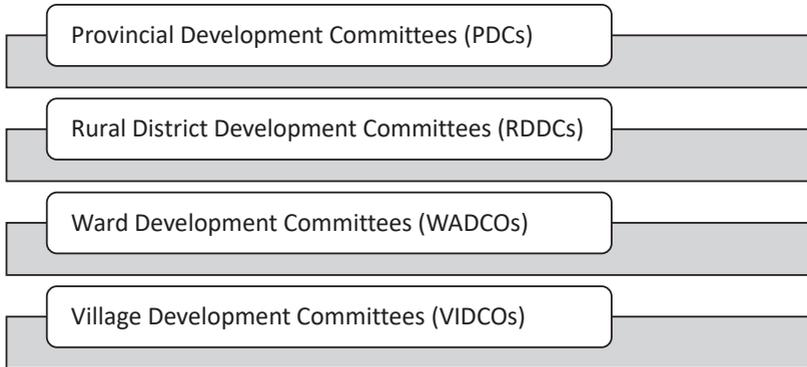
to their property.

Furthermore, the community members would also accommodate the refugees who crossed the Chipinge community. Much as the Zimbabwean government set up the Tongogara refugee camp during the first Mozambican Civil War, the Mozambican refugees were reluctant to be accommodated due to the fear of being repatriated back to Mozambique.

Two reasons can be attributed to why the community members accommodated the Mozambican refugees. First, this was due to pre-existing relations between the two communities. Diamon (2016: 464) states that the Zimbabwe-Mozambique boundary imposed at the beginning of the colonial era cut through Shona ethnic communities. Both the Mozambican and Zimbabwean communities used to be one big community prior to colonialism. This has been revealed through pre-colonial research that has been conducted by Zimbabwean historians such as Mudenge (1988: xxv), Bhila (1992: 640) and Dhliwayo (2014: 10). There are chiefs, such as Chief Mapungwana in Chipinge, who are in Zimbabwe, but their subjects are on the Mozambican side of the border. The second reason is that the Mozambicans had also accommodated them during the Zimbabwean Second Chimurenga (liberation struggle) in the 1970s. During this era, the Zimbabwean nationals had gone to seek refuge in Mozambique in the same way that the Mozambicans were now seeking refuge in Zimbabwe (Martin & Johnson 1981: 276).

I inquired further from the research participants why their respective communities did not take any initiatives regarding the violence from the RENAMO rebels. They attributed this to two issues. The first issue was the dysfunctionality of their community engagement structures. They stated that the community members have become fatigued about these structures due to the lack of implementation of the recommendations or the lack of response to the requests they make at any level of these structures. Some of these committees have not met for months due to this fatigue of empty promises. This is one of the factors that led to the absence of initiatives among community members regarding the RENAMO incursions.

The community members were referring to the structures are the Zimbabwean development committees. These community engagement structures run from the grassroots to the national level, as illustrated below:



**Figure 3: Structure of Zimbabwe Developing Communities**

**Source:** Zimbabwe Prime Minister's Directive 1985

In 1985 through the Prime Minister's Directive, the Zimbabwean government established these structures. They were part of the decentralisation drive, which the government purported to implement at the time. These structures were meant to facilitate democracy and engagement between community members and their local authorities at all levels. However, an earlier study I conducted of these structures (Muchanyuka 2016: 113) proved that these structures were not functional. This was due to a lack of political will in terms of the functionality of these structures. I established that these structures merely appeared on paper only. This was also confirmed by other studies, which reached the same conclusion. Kurebwa (2015: 106) describes the structures as empty shells that do not have any power as all the power is vested in the appointed officials in the central government. Jonga (2014: 75) also attributed the decadence of these local governance structures in Zimbabwe to the abuse of power by the appointed officials in the Ministry of Local Government.

The second reason behind the lack of initiatives is that the political environment in Zimbabwe since independence frowns upon such initiatives. The political environment remains highly sensitive to any form of opposition. They stated that such initiatives could be seen as challenging the authority of the political establishment. One male research participant stated that making suggestions to the local authorities was seen as challenging the government. He stated that such initiatives could be misconstrued as claims of the government

failure, and in the 1980s, one could even be labelled as a *Mutengesesi* or sell out of the liberation struggle whilst after 1999, one could be labelled as a member of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) opposition party which was formed around that time. He stated that such labels could put an entire family or community in danger of attacks from the government itself.

I further investigated this notion raised by the community members of whether the fear of political violence was perceived or it was an actual reality. I then established that the Chipinge community had indeed suffered from *political violence* in addition to the violence the RENAMO rebels had already subjected to them. The Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO forum's Political Violence Report (2008: 12) states how the police were detaining opposition activists in Chipinge unlawfully. Heal Zimbabwe Trust (2010) reported a Chipinge woman whose hut was burnt to ashes by youth militias. The article further informs that the Chipinge community had been affected by political violence to the extent that some were temporarily displaced (*ibid*). However, when the cases of political violence in Chipinge are juxtaposed with other locations in Zimbabwe, such as Harare, they are found to be relatively low. However, then the political violence from these other locations beyond Chipinge assisted in spreading the fear among its community members. Makumbe (2009: 1) noted that since 2000, Zimbabwe had moved several steps backwards to the realisation of democracy.

Nevertheless, the community's response was ineffective when analysed through a conflict transformation lens. Their response made them a soft target of the RENAMO rebels. Their accommodation of Mozambican refugees heightened the susceptibility of the community. The community needs to participate in formulating a response towards the RENAMO incursions. The grassroots community is one of the key ingredients of conflict transformation (Francis 2002: 8; Dube 2012: 300). This is because the community is more aware of how RENAMO operates and how it affects their community. The community is also aware of the best possible solutions to mitigate the violence unleashed by the RENAMO incursions. Understandably, one can argue that the community stands no chance against armed and dangerous RENAMO. However, through conflict transformation, there are non-violent methods that the community can utilise against an armed actor. These include early warning, early response, violence prevention, advocacy work, civilian peacekeeping, ceasefire agreement, and peace zones. The key to it is not to wait and take action when the attacks

have happened. Rather, the community needs to take action prior to incursions.

## **4.2. Government Responses**

In response to the RENAMO incursions, the Zimbabwe government employed three approaches: the armed response, the Rome Peace Process of 1992 and the Civil Protection Unit (CPU).

### *Armed response*

I tried in vain to interview military officials regarding Zimbabwe's role during the Mozambican Civil Wars. However, I gathered the data required from archival material and other secondary sources. The Zimbabwean government adopted a militaristic approach towards the RENAMO incursions from the data gathered. The government dispatched its defence forces to curb the RENAMO ulcer. The forces included infantry, paratroopers and the air force. The president of Mozambique at the time, the late Samora Machel (1975-1986), formally requested military assistance from the Zimbabwean and Tanzanian governments in 1985. This was when the operations of the RENAMO rebels had become very widespread in Mozambique to the point of overwhelming the FRELIMO government (Robinson 2006: 57-58; CIA 2003: 2358). However, the Zimbabwe Defense Forces (ZDF) had started military operations in Mozambique as far back as 1982. Dzimba (1998: 75) clarifies that this was due to a pre-existing defence pact between the two nations (Zimbabwe and Mozambique) dating back to 1981. Furthermore, he adds that the involvement in the war was for Zimbabwe to return the favour of immense support granted to the Zimbabwean liberation forces by the Mozambican government and other front-line states such as Tanzania, Botswana, and Zambia during its liberation struggle.

The ZDF military operations were initially done to safeguard the Beira corridor, the Zimbabwean lifeline to the Indian Ocean through the port of Beira. Mlambo (1999) states that the corridor is of crucial importance as it contains the Beira-Feruka oil pipeline, a power line, railway and road, all of which connect the city of Mutare in Zimbabwe to Beira in Mozambique.

However, after 1985 the involvement of the ZDF became intensive and extensive. The operations were no longer just limited to the Beira corridor, but rather they covered a wider geographical area. The ZDF operations even reached parts of central and northern Mozambique. The operations now involved

attacking RENAMO bases such as Gorongosa and Muxaba, liberating territories captured by the RENAMO rebels such as Caia, Mutarara and Sena, and even rescuing FRELIMO forces when they came under attack of the RENAMO forces. Mlambo (1999) details how the ZDF embarked on several military operations into Mozambique, as illustrated below:

Name of Operation	Date	Location	Country
Lemon	December 1984	Northern Manicaland	Zimbabwe
Grape Fruit	August 1985	Muxaba, Casa Banana	Mozambique
Octopus	January 1986	Southern Zambezi area	Mozambique
Zero	February 1986	Casa Banana	Mozambique
Ndonga-Chirenje	June 1990	Mepunga and Djambe	Mozambique

**Table 1: ZDF Military Operations in Mozambique (1980-1990)**

The table above shows how the operations of the ZDF became more extensive and frequent after 1985.

The gesture by the Zimbabwean government through the ZDF to intervene in the Mozambican civil war was noble. However, the ZDF did not effectively deal with the RENAMO threat. Mlambo (1999) states that much as the ZDF managed to win many battles against the RENAMO rebels, it did not manage to incapacitate them. He equates the whole affair to America's ill-fated involvement in the Vietnam War (1956-1975). He states that the killing of RENAMO rebels was very low especially considering the effort put in the operation. For instance, during the attacks on the Muxamba and Gorongosa bases, the ZDF managed to kill only 200 RENAMO rebels out of 1600 rebels who were suspected to be present at both bases. During the recapture of Casa Banana, not a single RENAMO rebel was captured, injured or killed.

Furthermore, the FRELIMO forces were no match against the RENAMO forces. This presented a complication to the ZDF forces in that some of their

victories were quickly reversed. In a matter of days, the RENAMO rebels would recapture the bases or towns captured and handed over by the ZDF to the FRELIMO forces. A 1986 Washington Post article written by Allister Sparks stated that Casa Banana was captured by the ZDF in August 1985 and handed over to the FRELIMO forces; however, the RENAMO rebels managed to recapture it from the FRELIMO forces. The ZDF had to launch a second raid to recapture Casa Banana in February 1986. The combination of the elusive nature of the RENAMO rebels and the incapacity of the FRELIMO forces ended up overstretching the ZDF as well.

Above all, the intervention of the ZDF did not manage to resolve the RENAMO incursions into Zimbabwe. The incursions became worse due to the ZDF's military intervention. Sheila Rule's Special Report to *The New York Times* in 1987 noted that the RENAMO rebels had stepped up their incursions into Zimbabwe. She stated that two incidents were happening weekly, with the main targets being the Chipinge tea estates. After the ZDF's intervention, most of the RENAMO atrocities were committed. These atrocities involved abductions, killings, looting, and sexual violence. The atrocities were committed to punish the ZDF for their interference in the Mozambican Civil War. This is the message that was spread by the RENAMO forces to the victims of its atrocities. Thus, the ZDF's pursuit of the RENAMO rebels into Mozambique left the communities along the border vulnerable to attacks by the same rebels.

The research participants indicated that there were Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) units patrolling the border; however, they were not effective due to the mountainous and undulating terrain of the border region. This worsened the porous nature of the border and allowed the rebels to attack the communities. Mlambo (1999) offers another explanation and attributes the attacks on the border community to the fact that the ZDF operations in Mozambique had overstretched their capacities. He states that all the other activities of the ZNA ceased even training due to the intervention. Dzimba (1998: 80) concurs with the argument and adds that the Zimbabwean government had to rely on the Zimbabwe People's Militia (ZPM) due to the over-commitment of the ZNA in Mozambique. He further adds that the ZPM failed to cover the gap left by the ZNA as it was paralysed by a lack of financial resources to fund its activities. This proves that the GoZ intervention in the Mozambique Civil War was not only draining the ZDF, but the intervention was also having a similar effect on the

GoZ coffers. The Zimbabwean government did not formally disclose the actual cost of the war; however, some estimates go as high as US \$5 million per month. Dzimba (1998: 80) points out that the expenditure for the war became even more than that the budget of education and development planning.

During the resurgence of the RENAMO conflict (2013-2016), the Zimbabwean government's response was a similar approach to that of the first Mozambican Civil War (1977-1992). The government deployed troops to patrol the border area. The troops, in turn, asked the communities along the border to create a buffer zone by moving 500meters from the border with Mozambique (Club of Mozambique 2016). However, this approach did not help much as the communities were robbed and attacked (*ibid*).

These instances prove that armed response does not help repel RENAMO incursions. Zimbabwe's armed response had three main flaws. First, border patrols are not effective considering the mountainous terrain of that area (Diamon 2016: 466). The second flaw is that border patrols are unsustainable due to the vast nature of the border area. The Zimbabwe-Mozambique border is over 1 231km long (Diamon 2016: 465). Thus, it will be difficult to have sufficient troops to patrol the border. The third flaw is that, based on the counter-attacks of the 1980s, the military approach has proven that it will incense the RENAMO rebels more and incite further attacks from the rebels to the Zimbabwean community. The impetus behind the attacks is that the RENAMO rebels accused the Zimbabwean government of interfering in Mozambican affairs.

Moreover, from a conflict transformation perspective, armed responses are not a sustainable solution to resolving conflicts. The armed response does not fully address the root causes of the conflict. In peace studies, armed response fits under the model of conflict management. However, this model is not effective, especially when used in isolation. Harris (2011: 122) labels conflict management as the most basic level of dealing with conflict, as it does not deal with the conflict but just avoids the further continuation of violence. The absence of violence does not automatically equate to peace; rather, it achieves a state of negative peace. In this state, there is always a likelihood of the recurrence of conflict as what transpired in this case. Muchemwa and Harris (2018: 3) define negative peace as the absence of war or direct physical violence without addressing unjust relationships. For any conflict to be resolved effectively, positive peace is required. Positive peace goes beyond addressing physical violence; it deals with structural violence, i.e.

unjust relationships. Galtung and Fischer (2013: 173-74) define positive peace as the absence of unjust, unequal relationships. It promotes social justice, equal relationships and inner peace at the individual level. Conflict transformation is the gateway to achieving positive peace. As mentioned earlier, it seeks to address the quality of relationships, justice, structural and cultural violence.

Despite the ZDF and FRELIMO's armed response to RENAMO, the conflict recurred years later. Armed responses at best manage only to stop the violence. It is a quick fix to conflict; thus, it is best used as a short term measure. It needs to be complemented with other peacebuilding models such as conflict transformation. *Civil Protection Unit (CPU)*

This was yet another avenue that the Zimbabwean government pursued to deal with the RENAMO incursions and their effects on the Zimbabwean communities along the border. The CPU was particularly active during the resurgence of the Mozambican conflict in 2013.

The unit is housed under the Ministry of Local Government, Rural and Urban Development in Zimbabwe. The Zimbabwean Civil Protection Act Amendment of 2001 enacted it. The 2001 amendment was for the Civil Protection Act of 1989, which replaced the Civil Defense Act of 1982.

In Chipinge, the CPU has been operational during any of the district's crises since the beginning of the 21st century. It was also active during the resurgence of the Mozambican conflict in 2013. During a key informant interview with an official from the District Administrator's office in Chipinge, it was revealed that during the resurgence of the conflict, the District level CPU intervened in the crisis by joining forces with members from various government departments and non-governmental organisations. The unit managed to assess the influx of refugees from Mozambique into Chipinge. The assessment focused on the needs of the refugees, the reasons for leaving their country and their safety, and access to services in their new locations. The official's statement was confirmed by the October 2016 Assessment Report on the Mozambican Influx into Chipinge District, Zimbabwe.

From the course of action taken by the CPU during the resurgence of the conflict, the response left a lot to be desired. Much as the CPU is a multi-sectorial entity, the response was only from the NGO sector of the CPU. The other arms of the unit, i.e. the police, the army, and even the social welfare, appear to have been dormant during the whole period. They were part of the 15 member Chipinge

CPU but did not assist the community.

Following these insights from the key informants, I then had to dig deeper into the CPU's matters and its responses to the various crises that Zimbabwe faces from time to time. From the literature I read, it became evident that the CPU itself had been facing several challenges, which robbed it of the capacity to effectively respond to most of the disasters which had engulfed Zimbabwe in recent times.

On the night of 14-15 March 2019, Cyclone Idai hit the Zimbabwean-Mozambique border region and other countries such as Mozambique and Malawi. The Herald of 22 March 2019 reported that the cyclone's winds reached speeds of up to 170 km/h, and the rainfall was reported to be 6 meters deep in some areas. The humanitarian organisation OXFAM reported that the cyclone-affected 2,6 million individuals in all the affected countries. In Mozambique, the AFP news report of 18 March 2019 stated that 90% of Beira in Mozambique had been destroyed by the cyclone, including communication lines and dams. The report likened Beira to a war zone. Six hundred people are reported to have lost their lives in Mozambique. In Zimbabwe, on the other hand, the cyclone swept away homes and bridges, among other infrastructure. The Zimbabwean Human Rights NGO Forum (2019) stated that the cyclone had killed 162 people in border areas like Chipinge, Chimanimani, Chiredzi, Gutu, Buhera, and Zaka; many others were missing after the cyclone. Al Jazeera News Agency (2019) reported that the deaths reached 185, and 270 000 people were in urgent need of food aid.

Following the disaster, fingers were pointed at the CPU for its lack of preparedness regarding the cyclone. This came after the Director of CPU declared in January 2019, three months before the cyclone, that the CPU was prepared for any disaster in Zimbabwe. Journalists such as Thompson (2019) indicated that preparedness and early response could have reduced the cyclone's destruction. He stated that schools could have been shut down in advance and pupils sent home. The situation at St Charles Lwanga High School in Manicaland in which 200 students were stranded could have been avoided had the CPU's early warning system. People could have been relocated to safety or temporary transit camps in the villages. He further pointed out that the CPU was affected by a lack of financial resources. During the 2019 budget allocation, the CPU was allocated US \$2.4 million, and yet it required at least US \$10 million. The

Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum (2019) stated that the CPU could have learned from previous disasters such as the Tokwe-Mukosi floods in which 1500 homes were swept away or even Cyclone Eline of February 2001. The Sunday Mail article of 17 March 2019 also pointed out that the CPU was inadequately prepared for the cyclone, given that the meteorological department had given a two-week warning in advance regarding the cyclone. It pointed out that the CPU was reactionary in its approach and not proactive. The article also pointed out that the CPU had a weakness in community participation.

Aside from the cyclone Idai disaster, the CPU also demonstrated its inability to effectively respond to disasters in Zimbabwe in the aftermath of the Tokwe-Mukosi floods of February 2014. The floods occurred following heavy rainfall in Masvingo province in Zimbabwe's southeastern region, which led to the partial collapse of the Tokwe-Mukosi dam. The floods affected 1 500 families in the area. The Zimbabwean Independent newspaper of February 2014 reported that the CPU had not been proactive regarding the flooding. The CPU chairperson at the time, in turn, blamed the shoestring budget, which the CPU was operating on. During the 2013-14 budget, the CPU was allocated US \$450 000, and yet it required US \$5 million. Scholars such as Hove (2016: 135) lamented how the CPU failed to assist the flood victims with access to water, food, education and health facilities.

The CPU's response had two major flaws from a conflict transformation standpoint. The first major flaw was that the CPU did not fully involve the grassroots community members in its structures. The grassroots communities were a missing link in their operation. This is one of the major elements of conflict transformation theory (Dube 2012: 300; Lederach 2012: 09). The grassroots communities must be involved in such a structure as they are more knowledgeable of the manners in which the incursions affect them. They are familiar with the direction through which the threats emanate from and the coping mechanisms which work for them. The grassroots members have a better idea of the possible solutions to the incursions affecting them. Involving them also allows their buy-in and ownership of the planned responses against the RENAMO incursions.

The second flaw was that the response was reactive in nature. The CPU took action after the conflict had taken place. It did not develop any proactive actions to safeguard against further effects of the conflict. In doing so, the CPU reneged

on the part of its mandate, i.e. ‘any service provided or measure taken to prepare for, guarding against and dealing with any actual or potential disaster’ (The Civil Protection Act 1989: 19). Pro-action was vital in this case, especially considering the Chipinge community’s experiences during the 1980s at the hands of the RENAMO rebels. Pro-action was also critical, considering how volatile the political situation in Mozambique had proven itself to be. This volatile nature had been proven by the resurgence of the conflict in Mozambique 21 years after the peace treaty, and thus for as long as the conflict is unresolved, the communities along the border remain vulnerable to further incursions.

Furthermore, effective peacebuilding requires actions to be taken after the conflict and even before the conflict. Lederach (2012: 09) affirms that peacebuilding can actually be instrumental in preventing violence and not just post-conflict. Accord (2015: 11) maintains that peacebuilding has evolved from simply the post-peacekeeping or avoiding a relapse into war. It adds that peacebuilding is now doing more than reacting to conflict dynamics and strengthening the development of local social institutions.

In the final analysis, the ineffective nature of the government’s response comes as no surprise. When one considers how the Zimbabwean government has addressed conflicts in the past, it is clear that effective conflict resolution is not one of the government’s strengths. This is a common thread that one can observe in past Zimbabwean conflicts such as Gukurahundi (1983-1987) and the 2008 and 2018 electoral violence, among others.

## 5. Conclusion

In summary, the Zimbabwean responses to the RENAMO incursions have proven ineffective. The responses are short term in nature, with a likelihood of violence recurring and affecting the border communities. The study recommends that the Zimbabwean government and the community come together and invest time and resources in the adoption and implementation of a conflict transformation approach to the RENAMO incursions. To address this issue, the government and community need to consider employing a revised long-term approach:

**5.1 Zimbabwe Government:** the Zimbabwe government needs to embrace three fundamental realities. The first reality is that the conflict between

RENAMO rebels and FRELIMO forces is yet fully resolved. The second reality is that the military approach to RENAMO is unsustainable. The third reality is that the CPU is not best suited for effectively dealing with the RENAMO incursions. The fourth reality is that the CPU is ill-suited to address the RENAMO issue effectively. This is due to the lack of adequate resources to deal with the violence and that the CPU is reactionary and not proactive.

In light of this, the government needs to provide leeway to the border communities and encourage them to devise community-based methods of mitigating the violence, such as local peace committees and early warning systems. This can be done by reviving these communities' pre-existing development committee structures. The government does not need to be directly involved in the revival of these structures and the devising of the early warning systems. Rather, the government will have to be involved from a distance. Furthermore, the government needs to consider extending the mandate of the NPRC (National Peace and Reconciliation Commission) to proactively address the issue of the RENAMO incursions before it is too late. There is a need for the NPRC to engage the community and facilitate training sessions for local peace communities, early warning systems, peacebuilding methods, among others. They need to guide the community to develop their own response plans against the RENAMO incursions.

**5.2 Zimbabwe Border Communities:** have to embrace the fact that the RENAMO incursions along the border will be a reality as long as the issues between RENAMO and FRELIMO are not yet fully addressed. The community thus has to consider taking the lead into possible measures they could take to foretell or mitigate the violence. This involves forming local peace committees that gather and discuss these issues and develop a comprehensive plan. However, the community will need to cooperate with authorities at all levels to avoid unnecessary suspicions. Communities will also need to engage with Non-governmental organisations to facilitate training sessions on how local peace committees and early warning systems can be devised.

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# The Qualitative Review of Human Security in South Africa: A Four Levels Analysis

Article DOI:

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## Abstract

Post-1994, South Africa is founded on human dignity, equality and ensuring fundamental human rights for all, enshrined in its democratic constitution. This comes as the advent of democracy in South Africa from the apartheid past coincided with the advancement of the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDPs) reconfigured security concept from a state-centric to a people-focused ideal. The new concept of human security integrates all men's rights, needs, and security with aspirations for sustainable and inclusive development. It advocates for the protection and empowerment of people against threats to their lives, something that the apartheid state failed to do as it was the main orchestrator of human insecurity in the country. Likewise, the article is a qualitative review of human security's role in post-South Africa's policymaking decisions using the level of analysis approach. The four levels feature the individual, local/provincial, domestic/state and global analysis. These analysis levels help shed a qualitative understanding of how a single dynamic in socio-political empowerment affects another. It concludes that despite the notion of human security being widely articulated as a conceptual basis for the country's official documents, it lacks de facto operational power to shape actual policy actions.

**Keywords:** human security, level of analysis, actors, South Africa, policymakers, qualitative, post-apartheid, empowerment, Security

## 1. Introduction

The birth of democracy in South Africa following the unbanning of liberation movements, particularly the African National Congress (ANC), as a result of mounting pressures domestically but also from the global community on the apartheid state renewed hopes of achieving a country socio-politically united and equal by race and socioeconomic opportunities. A country where freedoms for all its people and not discrimination and prejudice inflicted by the minority on the majority is the order of the day. This is because the new paradigm of Security that dominated global discourse beginning in the early 1990s significantly widened the scope of Security, enlarging it from issues of state-inflicted violence, economic deprivations and human rights violations to socially focused issues pertaining to basic human well-being and rights of individuals and their local communities (Ferreira and Henk 2009: 505).

To this, the prime aspects sustaining human security are glued together; that is, 'freedom from want', which very much relates to conditions of poverty and social injustices, and 'freedom from fear', which intrinsically relates to conditions of violence and conflict (MacLean 2005: 48) and systematic discriminations. This article explores democratic South Africa's approach towards the new paradigm of human security using the four levels of analysis, namely individual, local/provincial, domestic/state and global. It argues that despite much public rhetoric surrounding the country's appreciation of the human security agenda, there is a minimum practical reflection of this enthusiasm among policy actors from the various levels of analysis when it comes to operationalizing the human security agenda.

This paper focuses on the five human security pillars that can be explored using the qualitative methodological strategy out of its seven features. Instead of being singled out one by one, they are collectively grouped to demonstrate the intrinsic connection despite these defining lines among scholars and academics. Accordingly, Thomas (2001: 160) points out that human security does not entail some unavoidable events, given that natural catastrophes, including droughts and earthquakes, undermine human security just as poverty and lack of democratic participation do. Also, for reasons that even within a particular locality, they do not undermine everybody's Security the same way.

Having said that, the framework of analysis in the social sciences that is under

scrutiny emanated from Kenneth Waltz's 1959 book entitled *Man, the State, and War* and remastered in J. Singer's *The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations*. Although it is commonly a subject of debate, it appears surprising to note that not many scholarly articles use the framework (Hu 2015: 8). The present article borrowed the analysis model from international relations scholarship to demonstrate transdisciplinarity within the academic field of development studies. In addition, the four levels of analysis underpinned in the study do not describe every effect of the point of contestation, and there are complex dynamics influencing policy actions between the four primary ones. Having mentioned that, the levels of analysis will provide us with a qualitative means-ends analysis that will help us understand how one force in socio-political empowerment affects another. Generally, empowerment is the concept that integrates all the analyses (Nau 2020). For instance, the struggle for socioeconomic and political empowerment may cause insecurity; however, the struggle for empowerment may originate in the individual actor's greed for power. The greed for power is tasked for the individual level of analysis, while the struggle for empowerment is local and domestic.

## **2. Paradigm Shifts in the Security Regime: Unpacking the Real Conceptual Meaning of Human Security**

According to Marczuk (2007: 40–42), an early indication that a paradigm shift in the security discourse was on the way became vivid in a noteworthy publication written by Richard Ullman, entitled *Redefining Security*, in the first half of the 1980s. In the publication, the author made a typical claim for enlarging the idea of Security, and it argued that non-military menaces are growing more than ever before, and these menaces, according to Ullman, were threatening the political freedoms of nation-states and individuals with a potential to deprive him also of life's fundamental necessities. Likewise, the breath-taking political transformations that swept South Africa beginning in 1991 corresponded with the global calls for enlarging the scope of Security from its finite realist state-focused view to a multipronged people-centred perspective or human security. This required the envisioned new South Africa to design strategies to cope with the wider historically entrenched political, social, Security and economic obstacles (Bah 2007: 2).

Adapting to the new Security thinking meant acknowledgement by new South Africa, which emerged from the early 1990s democratic dispensation of the major challenges that posed serious threats to the pragmatic realization of human security, including healing and redressing historic social injustices and its resultant unequal socioeconomic landscape that continue to plague the country today, and restoring human dignities to the previously marginalized people whose human rights and honour were grossly violated by the previous regime. Now, as South Africa and the world were no longer preoccupied with the notions of preserving national sovereignty and securing national borders, scholars, actors and academics from across the world continued the push for new thinking in the security establishment that values the protection of people and the well-being of their respective communities (Ferreira and Henk 2009: 501).

Their perspectives of Security were now informed by social, economic, political, and environmental concerns, something that the traditional models were particularly defective at recognizing. This could be attributed to their inability to capture the well-being of individuals at a qualitative face value. In this regard, the notion of human security came into being as part of the comprehensive paradigm of human development formulated in 1994s UNDP by Mahbub ul Haq, with a strong influence from Amartya Sen (Ferreira and Henk 2009: 503).

The UNDP's 1994 Human Development Report (HDR-94) became a global instrumental document to phrase out 'human security' in conceptual terms with calls for policy and action (Jolly and Ray 2007: 463). Spijkers (2007: 5–8) adds that human security is first phased out as individual safety from grave threats, including poverty, disease, and political repression. And second, from the UNDP (1994: 1), it denotes protection from unprecedented and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily lives — whether in homes, in jobs or communities.' In accordance, Spijkers (2007: 6) asserts that human security is illuminated as a people-focused approach, one that seeks understanding on how people live and breathe in society, how freely they exercise their abundant life choices, how many available channels they possess to social opportunities and whether they live under conditions of turbulence or goodwill.

### 3. What is Human Security?

There is no clear-cut, or one size fits all definition of human security. However, as a starting point in defining what is meant by human security, Zondi (2017: 187) identifies certain features found around the discussions of human security. For purposes of this study, only four are identified, and these include that:

- First, human security is about empowering people to take full control of the means designed to improve their capabilities, protect their human dignity and strengthen their well-being.
- Second, it pertains to protecting the vital core of human beings: the acceptable quality of life, social equality, and enhanced human relations.
- Third, it ensures that individuals are free and safe from violence, related fear, economic want, poverty, and ill information.
- Lastly, in the case of South Africa, human security is a concern about the state and the market exercising their power in agreement with the people (democratic governance) and for promoting the good of the people (inclusive development). In addition, it is about the smarter concerns of Security, among them national reconciliation and restorative justice, post-conflict management and humanitarian assistance.

It is said that the causes of individual insecurity are eventually widened to encompass threats to political and socioeconomic conditions, health, ecological, personal and community safety (Jolly and Ray 2007: 465). In addition, human security is also perceived as a notion and a paradigm established to address pressing issues, including the moral imperatives emanating from the insecurities confronted by human beings from all corners of the world (Kamidohzono, Gomez and Mine 2016: 207). In a nutshell, the Commission on Human Security (2003: 4–6) states that human security implies protecting basic freedoms, freedoms that are the cornerstone of human life. It also denotes protecting individuals from pressing and prevalent threats and situations. It also entails using the processes that develop from people's strengths and ambitions. Still again, it denotes establishing social, ecological, cultural, economic, political, and militaristic systems that jointly provide people with livelihood, dignity, and survival mechanisms.

Nonetheless, like any other debate involving academic and policy actors, the human security discourse has also encountered opponents or sceptics who

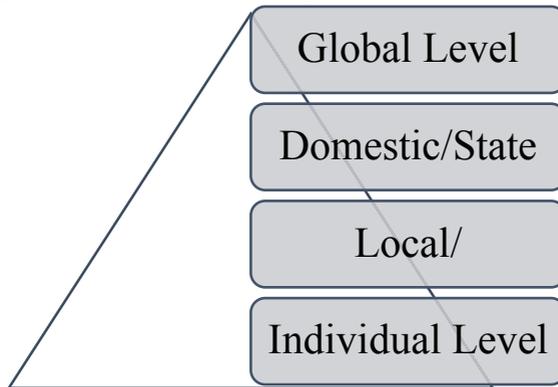
argue that the notion suffers from the shortage of accuracy and agreed-upon definition. It is also accused of being too broad and vague, like a shopping list for research and policymaking (Nugraha and Madu 2013: 74), which results in no well-defined limit-line and an arrangement of properly established theoretical foundations ways of achieving Security of the individual. Thus, Paris (2001: 25) incredulously infers that ‘if human security entails almost everything, then it essentially implies nothing’. Below is a closer look at human security from the levels of analysis informed by South Africa’s socio-political landscape. We begin by defining what is meant by levels of analysis and then ensue by classifying the various levels and their main actors regarding South Africa’s approach to the human security agenda.

#### **4. Methods and Approach to Analysis**

The paper compresses secondary data from a longer version of an exploratory literature review by providing a critical qualitative analysis of printed and electronic documents. This analysis is pre-tested with the patterns and trends identified in the literature review. A qualitative approach was chosen given that issues such as insecurity, poverty, protection of individual human rights and free participation in social life are sensitive matters because those who feel excluded by the status quo are poor and disadvantaged, which would have been daunting (despite being feasible) to gather data using a reductionist approach (Xaba 2016: 109). The province of Gauteng is used as an embedded case study of the level of analysis, meaning it is a subunit of the reviewed local/provincial level of analysis.

According to Thomas (2001: 160), human insecurity emanates precisely from existing socio-political and economic power dynamics that determine who benefits from Security’s privileges and who does not. These dynamics can be pinpointed at various levels, ranging from the individual, local/provincial, domestic/state, and global. This article explores democratic South Africa’s approach towards the human security agenda, focusing on the four levels of analysis. The idea of using the levels of analysis to review a qualitative development perspective draws from Goldstein (1994: 12), who defines a level of analysis as a perspective in the social sciences, especially in political science and international relations, that is founded on a set of similar actors or processes that suggest possible explanations to the social problem. It also enables researchers to qualitatively track the socio-

political cause of action modifications to diverse actors and their activities and associations. Figure 1.1 below introduces a pyramid-like sketch of the levels of analysis approach.



**Figure 1.1: Levels of Analysis in South Africa’s Social and Political Landscape.**

**Source:** Author’s compilation

The individual level of analysis is the primary and lowest level of analysis. At this level of analysis, scholars are concerned with personal characteristics such as perceptions, choices and activities of each human being ranging from the average citizen to the head of state. To clarify this assertion, this level analyses a particular situation or phenomenon concerning individuals as causes or solutions to that particular issue (Ogunnubi and Uzodike 2015: 23). The paper identified three prominent figures, namely former presidents Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma, as individual actors responsible for human security-related policy activities in South Africa from 1994 to 2018 when Jacob Zuma was removed from office.

#### **4.1.1 The Nelson Mandela Affairs**

Democratic South Africa presents possibly the most important case study of successful, locally driven human security and post-conflict reconciliation. Fervent training and mentoring of the country’s political leaders in mediation,

negotiation and peace-making supported the much-observed transition from racial apartheid to political democracy (Schirch and Mancini-Griffoli 2012). Immediately following his release from prison, he spent 27 years with former president Nelson Mandela and his predecessor FW. De Klerk collaboratively organised a Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) which paved the way for the adoption of a new Interim Constitution in 1993, thus officially putting an end to the systematic structures of apartheid (Ferreira and Henk 2009: 508–511). In his inaugural address to the nation in 1994, the new incumbent, Nelson Mandela, committed his administration to a seriously important reconstruction project and outlined the programme through which the reforms would take place:

The task at hand will not be an easy one. But you (the people) have mandated us to transform South Africa from a country in which the majority lived in insecurity with little hope, to one in which they can live and work with dignity, with a sense of self-esteem and confidence in the future. The cornerstone of building a better life of opportunity, freedom and prosperity is the Reconstruction and Development Programme (quoted in McLean 2005: 51).

Moreover, following his inauguration as South Africa's first democratically elected president in April 1994, one of the groundbreaking initiatives of his ANC-led government was the dissemination of a White Paper that significantly reorganized the mandates of the country's intelligence community. The second one concerned the establishment of a civilian defence secretariat to maintain a harmonious relationship between civilians and the military (Ferreira and Henk 2009: 506). Mandela committed himself and his government to transform the South African social, economic, and political landscape in ways that conform to the human security paradigm. During the early stages of Mandela's presidency, there was an even greater need for the country's new leaders to come up with strategies that would give hope to the majority who were previously marginalized and excluded from much of the country's socioeconomic privileges and at the same time ensure human flourishing for all citizens irrespective of race or gender.

The Mandela administration tried to promote equity in the construction of social conditions meant for long-term improvements in providing basic social

necessities such as education and health services, and other public goods as part of the broader package of social and political transformations (McLean 2005: 52). This equity in socio-political and economic conditions was purposefully steered to inclusively benefit the people whom his majority ANC-led administration regarded as the real custodians of government benefits and opportunities. Indeed, Mandela played his leadership part during South Africa's first years into democracy in promoting a social environment conducive to the entrenchment of human security values and principles among the political elites, civil society, and ordinary people in the country.

#### **4.1.2 The Thabo Mbeki Affairs**

The second prominent individual to feature in this analysis is former president Thabo Mbeki, under whom South Africa's engagement and compliance with the global call for promoting human security was heightened. We know that on 21 May 2003, the Speaker of the National Assembly, Dr Frene Ginwala, presented a Human Security Report to the Parliament of South Africa in Cape Town, where various initiatives were made by the country with regards to human security were highlighted. These included public deliberations on human security that were assembled during the 26 August – 4 September 2002 occasion of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in Johannesburg and an Africa-wide civil society consultative assembly in Pretoria, which was arranged by the Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA) (Ginwala 2003). This move proved profound for South Africa as it battles some of the issues of insecurity that continue to undermine its democracy to date.

The Commission called for global leadership, including countries including the South African ruling elite under President Mbeki, to adopt a holistic understanding of human security, which necessitates establishing systems that serve as the cornerstones of people's survival, livelihood, and dignity. It required a multi-sectoral approach that prioritises protecting people from pressing and pervasive menaces and conditions and building on their strengths and aspirations (Ginwala 2003). This Report on human security was timely for South African society and the Mbeki administration. It came when the country was monitoring its social, political, and economic progress a decade into democracy and from a history of state-perpetrated human insecurity and vulnerabilities.

Accordingly, Africa (2015: 186) applauded the Mbeki administration for giving significant attention to administrative outputs and performance, in which related government ministries and departments were required to consolidate their activities formally. His strategy proved successful in enhancing accountability and transparency of government organs to improve public services and protection of people by the state.

However, the greater focus on growing an efficient regime left many civil society structures with a passive perception. They felt that the administration viewed them as a nuisance instead of being its social partner in promoting human security and mitigating societal risks and vulnerabilities. For instance, during the Mbeki tenure, there were conflicts of interests between the government, the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) and other social organizations over the distribution and access to anti-retroviral vaccines (ARVs) by individuals infected with HIV/AIDS disease (Africa 2015: 187–188). The contention between the Mbeki government and civil society over the accessibility of life-saving treatment became a vital human security concern for the country that perhaps became one of the reasons that contributed to the downfall of President Mbeki. It became clear that civil society organizations are a force to be reckoned with, particularly in human security matters. The Department of International Relations affirms this view, and Cooperation's (DIRCO) online newspaper stated that 'civil society organizations play a crucial role in identifying and determining positive responses to the complex challenges of human security' (Pandor 2019).

#### **4.1.3 The Jacob Zuma Affairs**

The third prominent individual actor regarding the contemplating human security in South Africa is former president Jacob Zuma notable for many scandals surrounding his administration approach; however, the paper is only interested in handling the human security agenda. Having mentioned that, former president Zuma was arguably one of the leaders in the country most enthusiastic about promoting and ensuring human security for all. His address attests this to the 67th Session of the UN General Assembly, where he stated: 'The promotion and protection of human rights and vital freedoms should be placed at the pivot of our collective desire to resolve international disputes through peaceful means' (DIRCO 2012).

As such, President Zuma is said to have marshalled strategies during his tenure in office that were geared toward delivering the people of South Africa from the shackles of deprivation, want, inequality, marginalization and social exclusion, along with the countless human suffering and distress that had been a persistent reality even prior to the dawn of democracy in the country (The Presidency 2018). It is worth noting that social exclusion, poverty, and economic insecurity constitute the country's most pressing human security threat. To make things right and favourable for the well-being of all people in the country, the Zuma administration sought to embrace human security as a fundamental strategy for policy action. In this way, it acknowledged that addressing the holistic meaning of the human security concept demands coordinated interventions across society that would eventually transform the country beyond existing action models (Pandor 2019).

During his time in office, former president Zuma openly recognised underdevelopment, malnutrition and disease, poverty, and competition for scarce resources as the main drivers of human insecurity among people in the country. To address these social pitfalls, Zuma promised that his administration would sough-after the promotion of gender equality as well as the empowerment of women to leverage an effective people-focused strategy to reduce poverty, ways to combat lack of opportunities, and poverty and to stimulate an actual inclusive, sustainable development model (DIRCO 2012). Nevertheless, despite the much amusing public rhetoric of this administration, Zuma's leadership divided the country between ordinary people and the corrupt political elites who manipulated the populace, irrespective of the fact that the country's democratic constitution stipulates that the will of the people should assume centre stage in the nation's socio-political landscape (Alence and Pitcher 2019: 16). This undertone about the reality of the Zuma administration appears to contradict the human security values and principles that it claimed to be holding high on its agenda.

#### **4.2 The Local (Provincial) Level**

According to O'Riordan and Voisey (2001: 26), in the field of humanities and social sciences, the phrase locality has spawned arguments concerning how it should be interpreted, particularly with regards to scope. With locality being

mashed up to ‘community’, social science scholars commence by asserting that the numerous terminologies of the local (locality, localism, and localisation) all indicate a region or a place, and ultimately by its very nature, to the exceptionality of that region. Thus, in this paper, the phrase ‘local’ is used for this particular sense of designating the exceptionality of a locality (Hadju 2006: 39).

In support of this view, Christmas and de Visser (2009: 109) point out that in South Africa, the local government consists of 283 municipalities, varying in size, population, and resources from extremely disadvantaged rural municipalities to world-class metropolitan areas centres are locally known as ‘metros. They add that within all realms (spheres) of government in South Africa, local government it can be said, from the democratic Constitution of the Republic of South Africa possesses an even more compelling developmental task of realising the ideal living condition for the communities it serves (Christmas and de Visser 2009: 107).

This level of analysis entails a situation where the interactions of national actors congregate on a provincial or local level. Central to scholarly concerns at this level is the influence of civil society and metropolitan actors on the outcomes of individual provinces. For instance, this level of analysis focuses on the roles of provincial actors such as Premiers, local civil society organizations, government institutions, community administrators and individual activists. The local level of analysis explains outcomes from a provincial wide level that includes all metropolitan areas and their localities. It considers both the position of provinces within the domestic system and their interrelationships.

#### **4.2.1 *The Case Study of the Gauteng Province***

The Province of Gauteng was chosen in this article among the nine provinces of South Africa because it is the empirical case site of our broader research project. The 2012 OECD country report on South Africa’s socioeconomic and political conditions defines the Gauteng Provincial-Region as not only the most populous and urbanised region in South Africa but also the wealthiest province in the country, accounting for more than a quarter of the nation’s gross domestic product (GDP) (OECD 2012: 17). This perspective is profound if one considers the socio-political and economic insecurities that persistently impact the daily lives of the segment population found on the province’s margin areas.

As in the case of the Gauteng Province, urban spaces are seen by scholars as settlements in which the masses of people have better opportunities for political participation and become involved in non-agrarian livelihoods, including industrial engineering, wholesaling, retailing, artisanship and in various lines of socioeconomic empowerment (Clark 1986 cited in Mulugeta 2008: 9–10).

As a result of population increases and rural-urban relocation to metropolitan regions, the Gauteng Province is witnessing a boom in social challenges that are facing South Africa at large. This comes as scholars have become alarmed by what they term an '*urbanization of marginalization scenario*', which compromises the social well-being of poor and marginalized persons and communities due to excessive instances of urban unemployment, poor provision of public services, insecure livelihoods, and inopportune urban dwellings (Arndt, Davies and Thurlow 2018: 1). However, for the Province to address and mitigate human insecurity in its space, the Gauteng provincial government, guided by the ANC policy framework, has since the advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994, established a plan of action as its primary priority seeking to gratify all peoples' basic wants and ensuring that people fully hold the capacity to put into action their unwavering constitutional rights, relish the complete dignity of freedom cohesively and sustainably; develop inclusive, safe, secure and sustainable communities; create human resource capabilities and proliferate the capabilities-base in order to guarantee inclusive socioeconomic development and progress (Gauteng Growth and Development Agency 2016: 18–21).

Likewise, given that under the umbrella of the human security agenda, economic Security is a priority pillar that advocates for broader societal driven improvements or enabling actions on the capabilities of people and communities concern to give them resiliency from economic downsides as a way of empowerment (Commission on Human Security 2003: 30), the Gauteng local government has qualitatively embarked on socioeconomic initiatives such as the *Gauteng Tshepo 500 000* which is a multi-capabilities initiative that was instituted in December 2014, to enhance individual Security and social well-being by creating suitable conditions for entrepreneurial development, generating sustainable employment opportunities and improve youth, women and people with debilities' empowerment (Gauteng Provincial Treasury 2016: 49).

The overall objective of this strategic empowerment initiative is to expand the Provincial government's commitments to improving the capabilities, skills, and

well-being of all the province's people. This puts the Province of Gauteng in line with the overall commitments of the ANC government to promoting human security, even though in a much practical manner South Africa is committed to promoting the human security discourse on paper. This is because of social injustices in housing and land redistribution, people's right to adequate basic public goods such as water and freedom from wanting to continue to undermine the country's democratic foundations to date.

From this view, scholars argue that human security denotes security from physical violence and food security, political security, livelihood security, environmental security, health security, and energy security. It challenges traditional notions of Security by making individuals and communities the proper referent of Security rather than states (O'Brien and Leichenko 2007: 3). It is on this basis that contemporary security scholars contend that poverty and economic insecurity play a vital function in qualitative analyses of human security as they inevitably impact the capabilities and strengths of the poor and those individuals having tough times with socioeconomic marginalization to resist other threats to their physical and social Security (Eadie 2005).

### ***4.3 The Domestic (State) Level of Analysis***

This is the third level of analysis, and it concerns the authoritative decision-making units of national governing parties, their alliances as well as the collections of individuals such as interest groups and political organizations within a country that help shape both domestic and international events (Ogunnubi and Okeke-Uzodike 2015: 20). At this level of analysis, the objective is to locate actions in the character of the domestic system of specific states, locating South Africa's domestic socio-political debates that have unfolded between 1994 to 2018. Similarly, this level of analysis pays attention to the domestic system where states are observed as actors in their own rights, so to say they were vividly afforded as entities with certain preferences, and accordingly, focus on their actions and decisions to find solutions to our analytical problems.

#### ***4.3.1 The South African State Affairs from 1994 to 1998***

It is argued that beginning with the success of the democratic transition, which

officially put an end to a long history of systematic separate development, the South African state constructively embraced human security as one of its fundamental post-apartheid aspirations. Here, domestic leadership motivated by the supposed developmental promises of democracy surmised that the society's greatest sources of insecurity emanate from the destabilizing socioeconomic obstacles of poverty, social exclusion, unemployment, deficiencies in public education, healthcare, housing, social services and high levels of crime, inequality and violence (Ferreira and Henk 2009: 502). Making human security a part of the operational life of the new democratic state was essential to ensure sustained government commitment to the people and redressing past injustices. During this epoch, the pro-poor strategy of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) served as a hallmark of the nation's attempt to promote a sustainable and inclusive human security environment for all citizens.

Moreover, in order to address these structural stresses that were inherited from the now-defunct apartheid system, South Africa's ruling elite sought to integrate the country's domestic and foreign policies with human security thinking, and their formal documents frequently highlighted the government's solemn dedication to the Security of people (Ferreira and Henk 2009: 503), which was seen to encompassing far beyond mere physical security threats. To add to this domestic analysis, Esterhuysen (2016: 33) argues that in the South African context, with its long legacy of systemic discrimination and violence, societal dysfunctions and human rights violations under colonialism and apartheid, the novice ANC-led government instituted a conducive environment for the realization of novice compulsions of the human security agenda.

Between the period 1994 and 1999, South African leaders embarked on a developmental oriented social cohesion approach to redress historic injustices by promoting social harmony, domestic stability, and development using a human security discourse that firmly relied on a conceptual base formulated by home-grown scholars and academics and reflected on the country's 1996 Democratic Constitution (Ferreira and Henk 2009: 504). Moreover, the initial decimal period of democracy in South Africa was used to spearhead a holistic human security perspective across all state institutions and undertakings. It is thus safe to say that democratic South Africa's policy strategy signalled a functionalist stance premised on assumptions that institutional norms should inform structures of public sector engagements geared for achieving certain outcomes (Ferreira and

Henk 2009: 505). In this regard, domestic institutions were required to display and promote human security values for the overall good of society.

### **4.3.2 The South African State Affairs from 1999 to 2008**

The culmination of democracy in South Africa came as a result of a political settlement between liberation movements led by the ANC on the one hand and the apartheid regime on another. The main priority for this negotiated settlement was ending apartheid and replacing it with a novice constitutional democracy founded by principles, values and norms that gave prominence to humanity, social reconstruction and national reconciliation (The Presidency 2019). As the country deepens its democratic commitments after the success of 1994, human security from a South African context necessitated, according to Ferreira and Henk (2009: 507), the protection of society's cultural, economic, political and social rights, as well as basic human needs in order to guarantee freedom from want and fear. Domestic policymakers during this period intensively rolled out massive initiatives of human and economic development in which they also outlined numerous commitments across the broader human security conundrum. To this, intensifying the fight on historical socioeconomic, political injustices, and violence were shortfalls that specifically demanded resolution going forward (Ferreira and Henk 2009: 508).

Likewise, under the ANC-led democratic government, South Africa continued its course to enhance human security in the country by identifying and seeking strategies aimed at mitigating inequalities and poverty in society and backing social programmes in education, human settlement, gender equality, and many more (MacLean 2005: 66). Almost half a decade into democracy, domestic priorities of the state became more focused on economic and human development, something that was reflected in the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) approach (whose programme ran from 1996 to 2001). The novice approach prioritized market growth and employment for all, redistribution of the nation's gains with a particular focus on opportunities for the poor and historically disadvantaged members of society. It further acknowledged that supposedly in line with human security demands the need for popular access to adequate social services, including education and health, thus raising a flag on the significance of ensuring essential Security for persons, livelihoods,

and adequate settlement (Ferreira and Henk 2009: 510). Nevertheless, social and human security commentators openly disapproved of the GEAR strategy because it demonstrated a sharp shift in focus from the socially-oriented programming of the RDP towards a neoliberal focus of strengthening macroeconomic stability (Magubane 2002: 96; Maclean 2005: 60).

On the domestic front, one might point out that there are clear lines of commitment by the state to the course of human security, as is vividly articulated by the domestic policies and approaches adopted by the ANC government of the time. Due to its history of systematic marginalization and human rights violations, the South African state is keen to enhance the political freedoms that came with democracy and freedoms from want and fear, which relates more to societal well-being and people's rights and participation in governance. Lewis (2001: 3) supports this perspective, who contends that though South Africa is almost a decade into democracy, the transition from state-sponsored insecurity of apartheid is not yet over. Given that what lies ahead is the formidable task of ensuring that the country's abundant human and natural resources are efficiently utilised to benefit all, promoting sustainable livelihoods, improving social conditions, and mitigating poverty and inequality. Once the domestic government can ensure the full realization of these tasks, can human security be fully established in policy and practice.

### ***4.3.3 The South African State Affairs from 2009 to 2018***

A quick recap of the context of the article is that human security is premised on human agency. This means that human security views people as rational beings capable of dealing with their own adverse situations provided adequate and equal opportunities are offered. In this way, human security is considered an analytical tool for human empowerment. This potential is often overlooked by social conditions that systematically render the human being vulnerable to threats and shocks (Zondi 2017: 199). For this reason, the current domestic period is the lengthiest of the three domestic epochs and arguably the most controversial one regarding threats to people's freedom from want due in part to how domestic affairs and decisions in this epoch are managed and executed by those in power.

Scholars have contended that beginning at least in 2009, a class of 'securocrats' (almost like the one experienced in the country's domestic affairs

during the 1980s) have emerged in the domestic management of South African affairs in ways that seemed to contradict the country's initial commitment to the promotion of human security (McKinley 2013; Duncan 2014). They argue that the state has become extensively iron-ruled in recent years in handling the demands of the local populace for access and opportunities to basic rights and civil freedoms. In this regard, political analysts channel their claims to the re-emergence of a tradition of privacy within the state, claims of police brutality, the unfounded use by the state of the instrument of coercion, legal clauses that militantly contradicts the established democratic principles and values, and lastly a weakening of legislative oversight formations that serve as evidence for such trend (Africa 2015: 185). In the hope of addressing and amending the structural challenges that impede the full realization of the principles of democracy and human security values on the domestic front, the government launched its long-term strategy document to fill all pitfalls, the National Development Plan (NDP), in 2012 which according to government acknowledges the pitfalls that have engulfed the country's domestic political and socioeconomic landscape (National Planning Commission 2012).

Accordingly, Africa (2015: 186) further points out that during this era in South Africa's contemporary history, the nation witnessed heightened domestic policy opposition from several vested parties, including labour groups, organized business, and political pressure groups. In return, this has made it rather challenging for the government to make domestic decisions concerning how to effectively steer its second-stage transformation agenda for sustainable and equitable growth, which has been part of its national election pledges in 2009 and again in 2014 (Africa 2015: 188). Indeed, despite the controversies that engulfed the country during much of this period, the state made significant attempts to deliver its people from the shackles of inequality, penury, unemployment, socio-political exclusion in public deliberations and so forth (The Presidency 2018). This utterance is supported by former Minister of Higher Education when she states:

We have made endeavoured great success with regard to public access to education in South Africa. This marks a significant milestone for our democracy and given the inadequate provision of basic education on our continent, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa and other emerging nations

worldwide, one would imagine our country of South Africa has achieved heightened human security, especially through education (Naledi Pandor 2019).

The above utterances by leading domestic politicians and scholars highlight the mixed reactions to the complete operationalization of the human security discourse in South Africa and calls for further research about human security domestically.

#### **4.4 Global Level of Analysis**

This is the final level of analysis, and it is concerned with explaining international outcomes that transcend the interactions of states. Global factors can be the outcome of individuals, interest groups, states, non-state actors or even natural conditions. Nonetheless, they cannot be referred to as the actions of any single state or perhaps a group of state entities. For instance, the United Nations (UN), which was founded in 1945 following World War II by 51 ‘peace-loving’ nations’ is mandated, according to liberal scholars, with maintaining global peace and security, promoting human rights, and assisting member nations with finding permanent and sustainable resolutions to political, cultural, and economic challenges (Griset and Mahan 2003: 280). In short, at this level of analysis, we are forced as scholars and researchers to focus our attention on issues from a global perspective. Most contemporary issues now have more to do with the quality of life than concerns for war, peace, and economic equality; for instance, the focus is on human rights, good governance, security and stability and sustainable development (Holsti 1995, 17).

South Africa’s fascination with promoting a sustainably human secure world for all comes from the conviction that it is feasible and a historic obligation to create an alternative, better world, a global landscape of prosperity and peace in which all nations share the fruits of the earth. Thus, the democratic South African government of the ANC has untiringly championed the cause of human security and social justice in the international political economy (The Presidency 2018). Pivot to South Africa’s global human security outlook is its government’s self-driven awareness of well-being, and inclusive development, which underpins the optimism that Pretoria could never successfully develop

singularly for long whilst the continent of Africa remains trapped in protracted civil disorders, conflicts, penury, instability, gender-based violence, shortage of skills and formal education.

Notwithstanding, political commentators have pointed out that weak leadership in post-1994 South Africa has culminated in the country's disempowered citizens being unable to link their experiences of economic insecurity and poor governance with the experiences of fellow African peoples on the continent. According to Africa (2015: 187), this creates room for some profound questions that ought to be asked and mutually addressed, such as security for whom, delivered by whom, and for whose interests?

In addition, as one of the pioneers of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) through the leadership guidance of former president Thabo Mbeki, South Africa was among the major envisions for Africa's common development and security plan. This is because, among other things that NEPAD sought to achieve, it placed the responsibility on African states to establish enabling economic and political conditions for democracy, peace, economic sustainability, and good governance to take roots on the continent. In this regard, NEPAD aimed to find a meaningful equilibrium between adequate economic growth and enhanced physical security to realise a sustainable human development path. This demonstrates the New Partnership's inherent human security foundations, as its policy programme and plans provide the groundwork for economic and social dimensions of the human security agenda on the African continent (Zondi 2017: 195).

In a nutshell, on a geopolitical scale, South Africa transformed from being a source of insecurity to its regional partners to being a champion for Security and development on the continent, assuming a strategic mediation role in some of Africa's most protracted conflicts such as those in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Sudan, in Burundi and Lesotho. Yet, on the domestic front, the country has not fully overcome the apartheid inherited structural poverty, economic insecurity, and the frequent incapability of government institutions to efficiently provide basic wants of all people, to note some few shortfalls (Africa 2015: 178).

## 5. Conclusion

In summary, one has noted the dynamic function that Security has played in South Africa from the apartheid era where it was driven by state ambitions for territorial integrity and preservation of white minority privilege, which came to an end when new thoughts surrounding Security were gaining prominence on the global flora alongside calls for emancipation and freedoms for the masses of South Africa's people were inevitable. This new security regime of human security is people-driven and prevention-oriented as it advocates for holistic protection and empowerment of people as an enabler of social well-being and a guarantor of vital freedoms from want and freedoms from fear for all. Since the advent of democracy in 1994, South Africa has been among the most enthusiastic countries to promote the people-oriented human security approach, and most of the country's official documents and state activities have referred to the paradigm. In our qualitative inspection of human Security in South Africa, we used the level of analysis method, which does not give a detailed explanation of events due to the wide array of levels between the four key ones: individual, local/provincial, domestic/state and global. On the contrary, the level of analysis proved significant for the article because it enabled our qualitative exploration to follow up on changes in socio-political cause of actions by a complex network of actors and their respective undertakings and associations. At the individual level of analysis, we reviewed the activities and attributes of three prominent figures in the country's post-apartheid era, namely Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma. These figures were the mainstay of policy action with respect to the promotion and practical application of the human security agenda in South Africa between 1994 and 2018. At the local or provincial level of analysis, our interest was on understating the operationalization of human security by various groups of actors, to mention a few be it the Premier of the province, a Provincial Review Committee or community-based agents and organisations. At the domestic or state level of analysis, the focus was on official documents and policy actions that sought to promote and enhance human security among South Africa's democratic society. The fourth level of analysis looks at how democratic South Africa engages with the rest of the world on human security issues. Our main reference at this level of analysis was examining how Pretoria interacts and addresses human security concerns on the African continent. All in all, one

might infer that despite many deliberations on policy and keynote addresses, the country still has a long way to go before all the freedoms associated with the human security discourse can be practically realized.

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# The Southern African Development Community's Non-committal Approach to Crisis Management in Zimbabwe: The Need to Look beyond Norms

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## Abstract

The paper argues for the need to look beyond norms in accounting for the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) noncommittal approach to crisis management in Zimbabwe from the year 2000 onwards. To justify this need, the paper highlights some notable limitations in the dominant normative explanations for SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe. The paper posits that norms do not account for SADC's inconsistent approach to crisis management despite their popularity. Norms, therefore, provide a partial and incomplete explanation for SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe. The paper concludes that the key factors shaping SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe go beyond just norms to include regional power dynamics in SADC. Therefore, this paper recommends extending the debate on SADC's approach to Zimbabwe beyond the currently dominant issue of norms.

**Keywords:** Norms; crisis-management; non-interference; SADC; Zimbabwe

## 1. Introduction

Norms dominate the debate on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) approach to crisis management in Zimbabwe from 2000 onwards (Aeby 2017; Alden 2010; Chigara 2018; Dzimiri 2013, 2017; Nathan 2011, 2012, 2013). The dominant argument in these studies is that SADC's noncommittal approach to crisis management in Zimbabwe is shaped by the regional organisation's (RO's) affinity for regional norms of non-interference and disregard for democracy and human rights (Aeby 2017; Alden 2010; Dzimiri 2013, 2017; Nathan 2011, 2012, 2013).

However, this paper contends that norms provide a partial and incomplete explanation for SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe. A notable inconsistency is that despite being intimately involved in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Lesotho, and Madagascar crises over the years, SADC has been reluctant to interfere in the Zimbabwe issue (Cawthra 2010). This is just one of many inconsistencies in SADC's approach to crisis management in Zimbabwe that normative explanations cannot account for.

Moreover, if SADC's approach to crisis management were shaped by the RO's adherence to *regional norms* of non-interference, it would surely not have intervened in the DRC, Lesotho and Madagascar crises. Likewise, if SADC decision-making were genuinely influenced by the so-called regional norm of disregard for democratic principles, then it would not have gone to great lengths to condemn and refuse to recognise Zimbabwe's 2008 Presidential Election run-off amongst other issues. Therefore, explaining SADC's noncommittal stance towards Zimbabwe in terms of norms alone appears to be a misreading of the key dynamics shaping SADC's crisis management approach to Zimbabwe. While they may be critical in shaping RO decisions and behaviour, norms do not appear to be the key reason behind SADC's noncommittal approach towards Zimbabwe.

Noteworthy is that a theoretical or conceptual lens can limit the scope of issues interrogated in a study. Perhaps due to the limitations in the normative frame's conceptual scope, some key dynamics shaping SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe have been disregarded or downplayed in previous studies. Despite strong indications, issues such as relative power dynamics might be a key factor shaping SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe over the

years. However, power dynamics seem to explain that scholars of a normative persuasion who dominate the debate on SADC's approach to Zimbabwe have not been amenable. The effect has been that some key dynamics have remained under-explored, and SADC's approach to Zimbabwe and crisis management, in general, has continued to be misunderstood.

It appears that even some academics struggle to decipher SADC's noncommittal and inconsistent approach to Zimbabwe and crisis management in general. This is a challenge that Martin Nsibirwa and Peacemore Mhodi (2017) attest to. They caution that SADC responses to issues involving Zimbabwe are unpredictable and even controversial as they do not seem to conform to any set of principles, norms, or precedence. Zimbabwe appears to have a different set of rules than everyone else. This disparity appears to be the real issue shaping SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe and not adherence to regional norms of non-interference. Therefore, the paper advocates for expanding the debate on SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe beyond the currently dominant issue of norms.

The paper thus unpacks the concept of norms in international relations. This is followed by an overview of SADC's approach to the Zimbabwe issue from 2000 onwards. A discussion of the pros and cons of the normative explanations of SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe follows. This leads to a discussion or precisely a justification of the need to look beyond norms in accounting for SADC policy on Zimbabwe, followed by the conclusion.

## **2. The Concept of Norms in the Context of Regional Organisation Decision-Making**

The preamble to the SADC Treaty intimates that SADC is an international organisation (IO) (SADC 2014). While it is an IO, SADC precisely falls within the ambit of regional organisations (ROs). According to Jetschke and Lenz (2013: 626), ROs are a form of 'institutionalised cooperation among three or more countries within a geographic space'. Therefore, the main difference between IOs and ROs is the geographical limitedness of ROs. Within ROs, states usually co-operate on issues to do with economics, politics, defence and security. Importantly, regional cooperation arrangements such as SADC require some form of delegation and/or pooling of sovereignty. This is when states delegate

IOs/ROs authority to undertake certain tasks on their behalf and pool their sovereignty by undertaking joint decision-making within the IO/RO (Hooghe and Marks 2014).

Decision-making is, therefore, a key function of IOs/ROs. Kickert (1980: 22) defines decision-making as the process of choosing ‘a particular course of action to change and improve a certain situation’. Notwithstanding this simple definition, IO/RO decision-making is in actual practice a complex process that is shaped by a variety of enabling and constraining political, economic and social dynamics (Cox 2004). Scholars have thus, explained IO/RO decisions and behaviour in terms of these various enabling and constraining variables.

Lately, norms have emerged as a key variable and concept in accounting for IO/RO decisions and behaviour. Defined by Finnemore and Sikkink (1998: 891) as ‘a standard of appropriate behaviour for actors with a given identity’, proponents of the normative approach to the study of IOs/ROs posit that norms define identity as well as prescribe behaviour for actors, including IOs/ROs such as SADC. Convinced about the conceptual and empirical utility of norms, these scholars, commonly known as constructivists, have applied a normative frame to explain decisions and behaviour of ROs such as the European Union (EU) (Manners 2002, 2011; Whitman 2011). Utilising a normative frame, various studies have proven that the EU’s decisions, behaviour, and relations with other actors are shaped by the RO’s commitment to norms of democracy, the rule of law, social justice, and respect for human rights (Manners 2002, 2011; Whitman 2011).

Perhaps inspired by the successful application of the normative framework to the study of EU decision-making and behaviour, the framework has been increasingly applied to contexts outside the EU. In the case of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), a regional norm that prevents the RO’s interference in the domestic affairs of member states known as the *ASEAN way* has convincingly accounted for ASEAN’s indifference to the Myanmar crises (Alden 2010; Davies 2012, 2018; Pero 2019).

In some cases, however, the normative perspective has not adequately accounted for some IO/RO decisions and behaviour. A case in point is SADC’s noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe from 2000 onwards. The dominant narrative in studies seeking to account for SADC’s noncommittal approach to the Zimbabwe issue has been conceptually normative. Indeed some scholars (Aeby

2017; Alden 2010; Dzimiri 2013, 2017; Nathan 2010, 2013) have argued that the RO's affinity influenced SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe for regional norms of non-interference and a disregard for international/democratic principles.

Contrary to these scholars' suggestions, this study asserts that SADC's apparent affinity for regional norms is not enough to account for the RO's consistent reluctance to intervene in Zimbabwe and not in the internal crises of other member states. Similarly, SADC's alleged disregard for democratic principles is inconsistent with the RO's substantial commitment to democratisation in Zimbabwe and the Southern African region. These are some of the conceptual and empirical gaps in the normative explanations for SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe from the year 2000 onwards. Therefore, while they may be critical in shaping RO decisions and behaviour, norms do not appear to be the key reason behind SADC's noncommittal approach towards Zimbabwe. Given these notable gaps in the normative arguments, looking beyond the issue of norms might provide more plausible explanations for SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe.

### **3. An Overview of SADC's Noncommittal Approach to Zimbabwe**

In line with Chapter VIII (Article 52–54) of the United Nations (UN) Charter, which recognises the importance of ROs in the maintenance of international peace and security, SADC has been involved in efforts to manage and/or resolve various challenges in Zimbabwe from the year 2000. Also known as the Zimbabwe crisis, these challenges included a series of political, economic and social challenges (Mlambo and Raftopoulos 2010). SADC's approach to these issues has been the subject of intense media and academic interest (Aeby 2017; Alden 2010; Cawthra 2010; Chigara 2018; Dzimiri 2013, 2017; Masunungure and Badza 2010; Mlambo and Raftopoulos 2010; Nathan 2010, 2012, 2013).

Critics have accused SADC of reluctance to take a tougher or more active stance against Zimbabwe; a state that these critics allege to have 'blatantly' violated democratic norms and human rights (Aeby 2017; Alden 2010; Chigara 2018; Dzimiri 2013; Mlambo and Raftopoulos 2010; Nathan 2010, 2011, 2013). Domestic and international pressure and condemnation have done little to dissuade SADC from this noncommittal approach, which Dzimiri (2013: 282)

cynically refers to as SADC's 'blind solidarity with Zimbabwe'. Accusations of blind solidarity with Zimbabwe have emerged from the fact that SADC has not shown a willingness to criticise or pass decisions that would otherwise antagonise Zimbabwe when responding to various issues concerning the member state (Aeby 2017; Alden 2010; Cawthra 2010; Chigara 2018; Dzimiri 2013, 2017; Nathan 2010, 2011, 2013).

Although respect for democracy, human rights and the rule of law are key SADC principles codified under Article 4 of the SADC Treaty, SADC was reluctant to sanction Zimbabwe for allegedly contravening democratic norms and human rights over the years. The democratic norm and human violations included alleged state repression of opposition political parties (Nathan 2012). SADC also stood in solidarity with Zimbabwe on the land reform programme despite accusations that the Zimbabwe government violated the rule of law (Nathan 2012).

Hence, to account for what they viewed as SADC's indifference to the Zimbabwe issue, some scholars (Alden 2010; Dzimiri 2013, 2017; Nathan 2010, 2012) proffered normative arguments that the RO's affinity shapes SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe for regional norms of non-interference and disregard for international democratic norms. However, these normative explanations do not adequately explain SADC's noncommittal and inconsistent approach to Zimbabwe from the year 2000 onwards.

#### **4. Norms: An Inconsistent Explanation for SADC Inconsistency**

Several inconsistencies emerge from the normative explanations for SADC's noncommittal and inconsistent approach to Zimbabwe. A notable inconsistency is that no regional norm of non-interference can be gleaned from SADC responses to internal crises in member states.

##### **4.1 *Non-Interference: A Misnomer***

Proponents of the normative argument, such as Alden (2010), posit that SADC's noncommittal stance towards the Zimbabwe crisis is a product of the RO's adherence to regional norms of non-interference compared to emerging international norms such as the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). However, it is

important to highlight that the argument by Alden (2010) and some scholars with a similar perspective appears to be more of a misnomer than a factual understanding of SADC dynamics. This is because there is little empirical evidence to support the notion that SADC crisis management approaches are shaped by a preference for regional norms rather than international norms.

As highlighted above, the norm in SADC responses to internal crises in member states has been more interference than non-interference, as the Lesotho, DRC, and Madagascar cases prove. Therefore, SADC's non-interference in Zimbabwe is an exception rather than a norm in SADC crisis management approaches. A question that emerges from the above scenario is how SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe can be logically attributed to a phenomenon that hardly qualifies as a norm.

It is a fact that the circumstances in Zimbabwe and the three cases cited above (Lesotho, DRC, and Madagascar) somewhat differed. In Zimbabwe, for example, the ruling ZANU-PF party was the alleged driver of the crisis, whereas in the DRC, the country was rundown by armed rebels, and in Lesotho, the military launched a coup (Nsibirwa and Mhodi 2017). While these differences might explain SADC's inconsistent approaches to these cases, they do not invalidate the fact that all four cases were internal crises where SADC had to respond to violations of the RO's principles and norms. Furthermore, these differences do not negate this paper's argument that there is no regional norm of non-interference that can be inferred from SADC responses to internal crises in member states.

In common with Alden (2010), Dzimiri (2013: 282) examines SADC's responses to the 'humanitarian crisis' in Zimbabwe. Dzimiri (2013: 282) argues that regional norms of regime security influence the RO more than human security norms when responding to the Zimbabwe crisis resulting in SADC's 'blind solidarity' with the Zimbabwe government. Dzimiri (2013) concurs with Alden (2010) that 'the norm of non-interference impeded' SADC 'from taking a decisive position on the Zimbabwe crisis' (Dzimiri 2013: 279). Yet, as this study argues, non-interference has never really been a SADC norm in crisis management in member states. Therefore, suggestions that SADC was impeded from taking decisive action on Zimbabwe by a regional norm of non-interference may be misleading.

An important point to note about the concept of norms in international

relations is that norms are observable in the pattern of behaviour they create according to their prescriptions (Finnemore 1996: 23). As SADC's record depicts, there has not been any pattern of non-interference in as far as crisis management approaches are concerned. Hence, non-interference cannot be logically and empirically cited as a SADC norm in crisis management approaches. SADC's non-interference in Zimbabwe is a deviant case of SADC crisis management approaches. Therefore, SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe cannot be logically explained as a regional norm of non-interference.

Even in the case of Zimbabwe, it might be difficult to build a case for a SADC norm of non-interference, as suggested by Dzimiri (2013). This is because, though SADC was initially hesitant to intervene in Zimbabwe, it eventually did so through mediation efforts that resulted in the 2008 power-sharing agreement – the Global Political Agreement (GPA) (Aeby 2017). Therefore, SADC did get involved in efforts to resolve the Zimbabwe crisis suggests that non-interference might not necessarily be the norm in SADC's approach to crisis management in Zimbabwe.

#### ***4.2 Misconceptions in SADC's Alleged Norm of Disregarding Democratic Principles***

Just like the non-interference issue, the argument that SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe is shaped by a regional norm of disregard for democratic principles seems to overlook several contextual realities in SADC. Proponents of this argument make a number of assumptions that reflect that they could be using an inappropriate lens to view the subject of SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe. An example is Aeby's (2017) analysis of SADC's role in the Zimbabwe crisis from 2007 to 2013.

Aeby (2017) argues that SADC's approach of calling for negotiations rather than forcing Robert Mugabe to concede defeat in the aftermath of Zimbabwe's 2008 Presidential Elections reflects a conflict between the norms of democracy on the one hand and peace, sovereignty, and stability on the other hand. Aeby concludes that 'democratisation was subordinated to state solidarity, stability, and anti-imperialism' (2017: 15). It is, however, worth noting that suggestions that democratisation was subordinated to solidarity, stability, and anti-imperialism are not entirely factual. This is because SADC's involvement in Zimbabwe is

evidence of the RO's commitment to democratisation in Zimbabwe and the region, a fact that is acknowledged by Van der Vleuten and Hoffmann (2010).

Moreover, SADC's refusal to recognise the disputed 2008 Zimbabwe presidential election run-off results is a testament to SADC's fledgling democratisation record. These are all facts that Aeby (2017) appears to disregard when arguing that norms of democratisation were subordinated to state solidarity, stability, and anti-imperialism. If SADC was only influenced by peace, sovereignty and stability and not democracy, as suggested by Aeby (2017), then surely the RO should have been indifferent to the irregularities in the 2008 run-off election. SADC's unequivocal condemnation of democratic norm transgressions by Zimbabwe casts doubts on Aeby's (2017) conclusions that democratisation was subordinated to state solidarity.

### ***4.3 The Incongruity between Norms and SADC's Desultory Approach to Zimbabwe***

SADC decision-making on the Zimbabwe crisis and internal crises in other member states has been so inconsistent that it cannot be attributed to the RO's affinity for one set of norms or disregard for another set of norms. The inconsistency in SADC crisis decision-making has been acknowledged in several studies such as Nathan (2010), Cawthra (2010), Nsibirwa and Mhodi (2017). In a study focusing on RO responses to crises, Nathan (2010) posits that SADC's approach to Zimbabwe has been desultory over the years. Nathan (2010) further asserts that SADC's noncommittal stance towards Zimbabwe is shaped by the RO's adherence to the regional norms of solidarity and anti-imperialism and disregard for democratic norms.

Despite arguing that regional norms of solidarity shaped SADC's stance towards the Zimbabwe crisis, Nathan (2010) is self-contradicting when postulating that SADC has no common values. Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) explained that a value, principle or idea only becomes a norm when it is shared and held by a community of actors (see also Finnemore 1996). A question that emerges is how can SADC be said to be influenced by norms when there is no shared understanding of key values in the region? Based on Finnemore and Sikkink's (1998) assertion, there are no norms to speak of in SADC crisis management.

Similarly, Van Nieuwkerk (2014) contends that there are no shared values amongst decision-makers in SADC in crisis management. This is yet more evidence that the idea of norms influencing decision-making in a RO that does not have a shared understanding of crisis management might not be as plausible as previously argued. The fact that some of the critical tenets of norms are missing in the issues being referred to as norms in previous studies on SADC's approach to Zimbabwe makes the explanations in these studies theoretically questionable (Aeby 2017; Alden 2010; Cawthra 2010; Chigara 2018; Dzimiri 2013, 2017; Nathan 2010, 2011, 2013).

## 5. The Need to Look Beyond Norms

The argument that SADC's approach to Zimbabwe is shaped by dynamics that go beyond norms is not necessarily new. Indeed, a few scholars and analysts appear to have framed their accounts of SADC's approach to Zimbabwe outside of the dominant normative frame. However, such studies have been few and far between, and the more dominant normative perspective has dwarfed their argument. In some instances, the alternative arguments put forward in some of these studies have not been that convincing either. One such study is Cawthra (2010).

Specifically focusing on SADC's approach to the crises in Zimbabwe and Madagascar, Cawthra (2010) observes that SADC was much more reluctant to intervene in Zimbabwe than in Madagascar. For Cawthra (2010), the key reason behind SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe compared to Madagascar is that the economies of several SADC countries are intertwined with that of Zimbabwe and not Madagascar. While Cawthra (2010) extends the debate beyond the issue of norms, citing the economy as the reason for SADC's noncommittal approach might not be the most plausible explanation. This is because close economic ties are more logical if they are cited as a reason for intervention rather than non-intervention.

Indeed, that was the logic that informed South Africa's 1998 Lesotho intervention, shaped by the close economic ties between South Africa and Lesotho. Van der Vleuten and Hoffmann (2010) also support this assertion, who posit that non-intervention in Zimbabwe was costly to South Africa's material interests. In their study that explains the reasons for RO intervention and non-

intervention in member states, Van der Vleuten and Hoffmann (2010) go beyond the normative frame by arguing that the decision whether an RO should intervene in a member state or not is shaped by both 'ideational costs of pressure by third parties and the interests of the regional major powers' (2010: 738).

Hence, for a nuanced understanding of the key dynamics behind SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe, there is a need to apply a conceptual lens that goes beyond norms. This is something that Martin Nsibirwa and Peacemore Mhodi (2017) also recommend. They argue that within SADC, Zimbabwe is a powerhouse to which different rules apply. Therefore, when it comes to SADC decision-making on issues involving Zimbabwe, principles, norms, and precedence may be of little significance (Nsibirwa and Mhodi 2017). It appears that Zimbabwe's powerhouse status is the key issue shaping SADC's noncommittal stance to Zimbabwe from the year 2000 onwards. The limited conceptual scope of the normative perspective that dominates debate on this subject is perhaps why these arguments around power have not been pursued further.

## **6. Conclusion**

A highly topical issue since the turn of the millennium, Zimbabwe has divided opinion amongst scholars and analysts, domestically and internationally. Equally interesting has been SADC's rather controversial and inconsistent approach to crisis management in Zimbabwe. Criticised for being desultory and ineffective, SADC's approach to Zimbabwe has been the subject of intense scrutiny over the years. Notwithstanding this widespread academic interest, few have been able to pinpoint the exact dynamics shaping SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe. This has been partially due to an over-reliance on the normative conceptual perspective, which, as this paper argued, has some notable limitations in accounting for SADC's noncommittal and inconsistent approach to crisis management in Zimbabwe from the year 2000 onwards.

An issue that remains largely unresolved two decades on, SADC's approach is central to the challenges in Zimbabwe as its response can be the difference between containment and calamity. As such, the key dynamics must shape SADC's crisis management approach to Zimbabwe to be well understood for the benefit of the Zimbabweans, SADC, and the international community.

History has taught us that a misreading of these key dynamics shaping RO crisis management approaches can have disastrous consequences, and the sad case of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the 1994 Rwandan genocide bears testimony to this.

In light of the above, this paper highlighted some inadequacies in the normative explanations of SADC policy on Zimbabwe from the year 2000 onwards. In doing so, the study argued for the extension of debate on the key dynamics shaping SADC policy in Zimbabwe beyond the currently dominant normative perspective to include, amongst other factors, the regional power dynamics in SADC. Norms appear to be a ready and simple argument to account for IO/RO decisions and actions. It is critical to understand that while normative arguments may have been valid in the EU context, applying this framework to the case of SADC decision-making has some fundamental flaws. Therefore, the normative framework is not convincingly applicable to all contexts, as the case of SADC's approach to Zimbabwe has revealed.

Noteworthy is that SADC's Zimbabwe approach has not been consistent with the key tenets of the concept of norms. The concept of norms emphasises that values, beliefs and identity should be shared amongst actors to be classified as norms. Commenting on norms and decision-making in SADC, Van Nieuwkerk (2014) argues that the set of values and norms that is supposed to shape decision-making in SADC is not unified but is fractured. Therefore, if not erroneous, it is difficult to portray SADC decision-making as being shaped by any set of norms where the RO does not have a shared set of values. There is little basis for arguments that SADC is influenced by a disregard for democratic norms or affinity for regional norms of solidarity and non-interference when there is no shared conception of these norms and values amongst decision-makers in SADC.

Moreover, a key tenet of norms is that a principle or value only becomes a norm when it is consistently enforced (Finnemore 1996; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998). Therefore, it is conceptually unjustifiable for one to claim that non-interference is the norm informing SADC crisis management when there is no pattern of SADC non-interference elsewhere except in Zimbabwe. Thus, SADC appears to have followed pragmatic logic in decision-making rather than strict adherence to the norms of non-interference. This pragmatic logic recognises Zimbabwe's regional powerhouse status and influence. A conceptual lens that recognises the nexus between power and decision-making would perhaps

provide a more nuanced understanding of the key dynamics behind SADC's noncommittal approach to Zimbabwe from the year 2000 onwards.

Importantly, this paper's central argument should not be misconstrued as implying that norms are insignificant in regional integration or SADC. Indeed, intergovernmental organisations (including SADC) are anchored by certain norms and principles. While implementing these norms may be contested, this does not mean that they (norms) are not important. Rather, this paper posits that for a complete picture of SADC's noncommittal approach towards Zimbabwe, the debate has to be extended beyond just the issue of norms.

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## ANALYSES





# Covid-19 Vaccine Nationalism and Vaccine Diplomacy: A New Currency in Soft Power?

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## Abstract

This article merges and examines the following four phenomena, (1) pandemics which are predominantly a human security matter, (2) vaccines and vaccinations, which are predominantly a public health matter, (3), power which is the alpha currency in international relations and, (4), finally ideology. Global developments such as wars, revolutions and pandemics usually give rise to new forms of power, redrawing power configurations and in some cases shifting and redrawing biographical and geographical boundaries. This article explores the rise of vaccine nationalism and how it will impede the global efforts to curtail the devastation of the Covid-19 pandemic. I also present the Covid-19 vaccine as a new currency in soft power that, unlike hard power, is owned by an emerging vaccine oligarchy epitomised as Big Pharma. Vaccine nationalism is positioned as being counterproductive to efforts to reduce the effects of the virus. This way, vaccine nationalism and vaccine diplomacy constitute new forms of and fronts for colonialism. I conclude by asserting that vaccine nationalism will result in more asymmetrical power relations in international relations as the vaccine will gradually become a new form of soft power. As a form of soft power, the vaccine will entrench and perpetuate coloniality. Vaccine nationalism and vaccine diplomacy are self-defeating, will aid those paddling eugenics and result in a new form of inequality, vaccine inequality.

**Keywords:** vaccine nationalism, vaccine diplomacy, coloniality of the pandemic, vaccine soft power, Big Pharma, World Health Organisation, Covid-19, pandemics.

## 1. Introduction

How do we deal with phenomenal issues such as global pandemics, which brings four domains together; (1), pandemics which are predominantly a human security matter, (2), vaccines and vaccinations, which are predominantly a public health and epidemiological matter, (3), power which is the alpha currency in international relations, and finally (4), ideology. Of the four, human security, public health, power and ideology, I position ideology, i.e., capitalism and nationalism, to determine how the world reacts to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Since its invention concurrently with colonialism, epistemicides and genocides in the Iberian Peninsula's Reconquista in 1496, nationalism has proved to be the most resilient ideology in the world. It always finds ways of remaining relevant, which can be attributed to the resilience of the nation-state as a form of identity. Of late, nationalism has found relevance and new application in the Covid-19 pandemic period through what has been termed vaccine nationalism. Contrary to orthodox views, the greatest threat to global peace and human security is not the Covid-19 pandemic but vaccine nationalism. Others have gone as far as asking a very important question: what is the cure for vaccine nationalism (Rutschman 2021). Could the answer reside in ethics and morality, or maybe the answer is to be found in summoning the spirit of humanity? Humanity is not a good student of history as it repeats the mistakes of the Spanish Influenza and other past pandemics (Marais 2011; Zack 2018: 184). Geography and, most importantly, economic class are still used as determinants of who gets vaccinated, when and how many times. Most importantly, these identities are used to determine who does not get the vaccine and, by implication, who is at a higher risk of being infected and dying. With the multiple declarations on human rights, the right to life supersedes other nationalist and me-first based criteria for distributing human security-enhancing vaccines.

I expose the myth and fallacy of international cooperation and solidarity and juxtapose it to the realist manner in which nations and corporations selfishly look after their own in the face of national and international threats to peace and security. The problem of nationalist self-preservation tendencies at the expense of the other is rooted in the Western model of the nation-state, which was inaugurated not at Westphalia in 1694, but in 1496 when the processes of colonialism started with the Christian Reconquista, which played out in the

Iberian peninsula and the Americas (Wallerstein 1974: 314; Cipolla 1976: 143). This Western model of the nation-state has four main characteristics: (1) the will to power, (2) a paradigm of war, (3) a paradigm of differences, and (4) survival of the fittest. These do not aid human security but national security, i.e., nation-state preservation.

The central argument in this article is that without rethinking and then reformulating the western model of the nation-state, problems that are encountered during the Covid-19 vaccine fiasco will recur. In a fashion that resembles eugenics and pseudoscience, the western nation-state model, when faced with a pandemic like Covid-19, culls the weakest members of humanity. In this explorative article, I unpack seven issues, I (1) reiterate the resurgence of nationalism during pandemics as a threat to international human security, (2) propose a cure for vaccine nationalism and vaccine equity, (3) allude to vaccine inequality emanating from vaccine nationalism, (4), postulate the rise of the Covid-19 vaccine as the newest form of soft power, (5), predict the rise of a new vaccine oligarchy which is the Big Pharma, (6), argue that vaccine nationalism is a counterproductive to collective security, (7), position vaccine nationalism as a new form of colonialism, i.e., coloniality of the vaccine.

## **2. Locating Vaccine Nationalism in International Relations**

One of the pillars of contemporary international relations is the notion of collective security. Embodied in the United Nations Charter, collective security is touted as the most important aspect and prospect for peace in the international arena. Collective security gained more relevance in the aftermath of the cold war, in which it replaced the balance of power doctrine as the main doctrine in international relations. As a doctrine, collective security prescribes that a threat to one member of the international community is a threat to all. Collective security also comes with collective responsibility. The international community collectively has a responsibility to protect its members. The Covid-19 pandemic provided a propitious moment to test the applicability of collective security and responsibility doctrine. The myth of international cooperation in the face of the greatest threat to humanity has been exposed thanks to vaccine nationalism. States have always acted in their self-interest, and whenever they cooperated, such cooperation was efficacious in furthering their mutual national interests.

When international cooperation benefited the other parties, especially those of the Global South, this was a positive externality that the initiating partner(s), especially those of the Global North, would not mind. The Covid-19 pandemic demonstrated that when push comes to shove, nations become ultra-selfish, with some holding as many as four times vaccines compared to their population sizes when some African countries had not received a single dose.

Vaccine nationalism is practised by rich countries where they use their power to get first access to the Covid-19 vaccine (Ferguson and Caplan 2020; Santos Rutschman 2020; Fidler 2020). Vaccine nationalism, like all other forms of exclusionary philosophies and ideologies, is divisive and more lethal than Covid-19. It was inevitable that the Covid-19 vaccine could escape the divisiveness that persists in the international order in a world dominated by national interest and real-politic. The long and short political challenges caused by the Covid-19 is that the emerging nations are at a higher risk than richer nations. It is not a coincidence that most of the richer nations where the vaccine is manufactured or owned were part of the colonisers, while the emerging nations who are at a higher risk of not getting the vaccine were part of the colonised countries. This link is important to establish because, like all forms of nationalism, vaccine nationalism will entail that those countries with the capacity to produce vaccines will benefit themselves and their allies first before they think of other emerging countries in the world.

The actualisation of Covid-19 vaccine nationalism is widening inequality between the rich and the poor, both at an individual, household and at the national level. Rich and powerful nations are likely going to mitigate the risk of Covid-19 better than economically and militarily weak and emerging nations, thereby increasing the human security risk between these two general sets of countries. With the intensification of vaccine nationalism, the Covid-19 pandemic will become more devastating as the 'poor other' will go for longer periods without accessing the vaccine. Human movement is bound to be restricted without being vaccinated as the unvaccinated would become the 'dangerous other' who must not mix with the vaccinated. The human movement of the unvaccinated will be greatly curtailed, if not criminalised as spreaders of a virus hence threats to human security.

I predict the impending coloniality of the vaccine. This is because the Covid-19 vaccine will become a source of divisiveness, exclusion and a symbol of

power, with those able to manufacture and procure the vaccine becoming more powerful than those who cannot produce or procure it. The new global currency in soft power will be the Covid-19 vaccine. It is not far-fetched to postulate that the vaccine is the new source of soft power. If we are to learn from our history, the vaccine will be tied to aid, democracy, transitional justice and other liberal constructs. With the vaccine being produced by capitalist companies whose executives are driven by the need to increase profitability rather than save lives, the vaccine will soon be sold to the highest bidder. This is understandable because Big Pharma, as they are called, are not humanitarian organisations but capitalist ventures.

International relations is dominated by two forms of power, hard and soft power. Hard power is coercive (military and economic), while soft power is attractive (Nye 2004: x). Hence, a country's pharmaceutical companies' ability to produce the Covid-19 constitutes soft power. Soft power is the ability of a country or any entity in international relations to attract and co-opt instead of hard power that coerces and forces. Non-state actors in international relations such as non-governmental organisations, multinational corporations, religious organisations and elites also possess soft power (Nye 2011: 83).

Multilateral institutions, nations, regional groupings and pharmaceutical companies are ceased with a seemingly vexing question of what mechanism and formula to distribute the Covid-19 vaccines. Three options present themselves: egalitarianism, nationalism and imperialism. Vaccine nationalism entails prioritising citizens in whose countries the vaccines are produced, while vaccine imperialism entails that those countries who can afford to pay will get as many vaccine doses as they ordered. The overarching question is: is the Covid-19 vaccine a global common good, a private property belonging to the Big Pharma who invested in the vaccine's research and development (R&D), or to the nations where these Big Pharma are domiciled? The answer to whether the vaccine is a common good or a private property determines how it will be distributed. If the vaccine is a global common good, then those who need it the most must be prioritised, i.e., a need-based distribution model. If the vaccine is Big Pharma's private property, it must be sold to the highest bidders. If it belongs to the countries where Big Pharma are resident, they must be distributed on a nationalist basis. Each of these three scenarios has its advantages and disadvantages, and the temptation is always to combine the three and somehow formulate a compromisingly middle ground

distribution model — one which has elements of nationalism, imperialism and egalitarianism.

The solution to vaccine nationalism and its negative impact is for African countries to develop their capacities to produce the vaccine; after all, they have the epistemologies to tap into. Regional powerhouses such as South Africa, Nigeria, Egypt and Kenya should lead the efforts to produce the vaccine in Africa. Current efforts such as the work of the African Union Special Envoy on the Covid-19 crisis and the work of the Africa Centre for Disease Control (Africa CDC) are part of the problem as they perpetuate vaccine dependency and vaccine coloniality since they function as outposts of the Global North and its corporate and national interests.

### **3. The Efficacy of Vaccine Diplomacy in International Relations**

In its simplest form, diplomacy is both an art and science of establishing and maintaining peaceful relations among nations and even organisations in the international arena. Vaccine diplomacy is closely linked to health and science diplomacy (Shakeel et al. 2019; Hotez 2019; 2014). By its very nature, diplomacy is a very difficult practice to regulate and predict. It is one where covert and overt means have been used to establish, gain and maintain and assert a nation's interest in the international arena. According to Hotez;

Vaccine diplomacy refers to almost any aspect of global health diplomacy that relies on the use or delivery of vaccines [...] and other important international organisations. Central to vaccine diplomacy is its potential as a humanitarian intervention and its proven role in mediating the cessation of hostilities and even cease-fires during vaccination campaigns (Hotez 2014: 2).

Nations are always looking for new ways of asserting their diplomatic footprint on the international scene. Natural disasters such as floods, volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes have been previously used as sources of diplomacy. Relations that would have been at a standstill or on the brink of war can, in an instance, begin to thaw and cooperate courtesy of national disasters. Vaccine diplomacy cannot be perceived as something entirely new; it is just the latest instrument of field diplomacy.

The efficacy of vaccines diplomacy cannot be overemphasised. For example, Russia has been struggling to win over the weak and fragile states of Eastern Europe from the North Atlantic treaty organisation (NATO). When NATO member-states preferred vaccine nationalism, Russia then seized the opportunity to assist these countries with its Sputnik V vaccine, and China also brought in its Sinovac vaccine, and the two are winning these countries over from NATO. Already Hungary is using the Russian and Chinese vaccines and not those manufactured in Europe. The Czech Republic, Croatia, Serbia and Poland are all in line to receive their vaccines from Russia and China. This is why I asserted at the beginning that pandemics can be used to redraw ideological and international borders. In this example, the Eastern Bloc, through Russia and China, are slowly winning back the countries that it had lost to Western Europe in the aftermath of the Cold War.

The efficacy of vaccine diplomacy is in that it is implemented when the other party is at their most vulnerable moments. In a way, vaccine diplomacy is akin to duress diplomacy; take my vaccine on my terms or let your people perish from the Covid-19 pandemic. There are very few, if any, options in vaccine diplomacy. This is exactly the moment that China and Russia have been waiting for. Their work was cut out when Donald Trump pulled the United States out of many multilateral agreements, in the process rendering America very nationalistic through his America first mantra. The Covid-19 pandemic would not have come at a better time for China and Russia. This has fuelled the speculation that, indeed, this vaccine is a Chinese and or Russian manufactured virus. There is no scientific evidence to back up this innuendo. In the meantime, China and Russia are making of the pandemic.

China has sold and donated vaccines to 13 African countries, according to Bridge Consulting, a consultancy firm for the philanthropic and global development sector: Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Senegal, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Congo, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. It also gives them to countries in Asia, Latin America, and Europe, as most Western countries focus on securing vaccine doses for their populations. China used vaccine diplomacy to unlock the frosted relations with The Philippines, which had become acrimonious because of the contested South China Islands, whose sovereignty is still contested with China claiming ownership of the majority of these islands. Covid-19 ravaged The Philippines received does of

the Sinovac vaccines at the Villamor Air Base in Manila, the Philippines on 28 February 2021, and President Rodrigo Duterte declared to Chinese Ambassador to the Philippines Huang Xilian, '[The Philippines] would be 'back to normal' by December, thanks to Chinese assistance' (Heydarian and Jin 2021). The efficacy of vaccine diplomacy in unlocking relations was demonstrated in this case, justifying China's decision to invest heavily in the vaccine through allocating large subsidies to 22 companies and research institutes to work on as many as 17 Covid-19 vaccines.

In East Asia, China donated vaccines to Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and The Philippines. China's South-East problems were suddenly solved, ironically, by a vaccine to a virus largely believed to have originated from Wuhan, China. Indonesia, for example, became the largest testing site for Chinese Covid-19 vaccines, cementing their bilateral relationship in the process. Eastern Europe, Africa, East Asia and Latin America were suddenly closer to China than ever before; in the process, China proved that it is an all-weather friend (unlike nationalist western Europe and the United States, which proved once again to be conditional friends. China's aim of donating its Sinovac vaccine to 69 countries is well on course and will yield benefits to China's quest to dominate the hearts and minds of the West's marginalised countries. However, China's vaccine diplomacy was not 100% effective as Vietnam refused the Sinovac vaccine for various medical and political reasons, chief among them being that the Sinovac vaccine had the lowest efficacy at 50.4% (Heydarian and Jin 2021). Singapore relied entirely on western vaccines while Indonesia, Cambodia, Malaysia and Thailand relied on multilateralism, going with the United Nations backed COVAX scheme. In the middle of China's relentless vaccine diplomacy, there is still room for multilateralism in IR. In response to China's vaccine diplomacy, the US, Australia, India and Japan formed the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, aiming to produce 1 billion doses for Eastern Asia, a region where China proved to be ahead.

From mask diplomacy to vaccine diplomacy, where Chinese businessman Ali Baba owner Jack Ma donated millions of personal protective equipment to the same client states, China is slowly developing its Health Silk Road slowly but surely. No doubt, vaccine diplomacy will aid Russia and China to deepen their relationship with their vaccine benefactors. That the pandemic is strongly believed to have originated from China is now water under the bridge. Instead

of standing accused of originating the virus, China is, on the contrary benefiting from the pandemic. Vaccine diplomacy opens doors to negotiation over what would have been unthinkable before its implementation. All of a sudden, Russia and Bolivia are on talking terms discussing issues such as building nuclear power stations and lithium gas reserves mining.

Soon after Moscow sold 5.2 million doses of its Sputnik V vaccine, President Vladimir Putin was on the phone with his Bolivian counterpart, Luis Arce, in late January, discussing topics from building a nuclear power plant to lithium mining and gas reserves. In North Africa, Algeria did not pay a dime for the Chinese vaccines that arrived in March. What it did offer was to support Beijing's 'core interests' and oppose interference in its 'internal affairs' — language China has used to defend against criticism over Hong Kong's autonomy and allegations of human rights abuses in Xinjiang, which it denies (Smith 2021).

For China, vaccine diplomacy solved its major headaches: access to Bolivia's natural resources, a nuclear client in South America, and international support for its one-China stance in Hong Kong and Taiwan. While Russia and China are using vaccine diplomacy to expand their international spheres of influence, the United States and the European Union member states are stuck in vaccine nationalism mode, in the process gifting Russia by excluding former eastern bloc countries such as Ukraine, the Czech Republic, and Hungary access to EU vaccines. For these former eastern bloc turned EU members, Covid-19 has shown them where they belong, i.e., eastern Europe and not western Europe, with Russia and China and not the EU and the US.

#### **4. The Fallacy of Vaccine Nationalism in International Relations**

Vaccine nationalism cannot be dismissed as lacking in merit. The US under Donald Trump championed vaccine nationalism with Peter Marks, of the US Food and Drug Administration comparing the vaccine nationalism to the allocation of oxygen masks in a depressurised aeroplane, marks noted, 'You put on your own first, and then we want to help others as quickly as possible,' (Bollyky and Bown 2020: 96). Bollyky and Bown responded well to the analogy by noting that aeroplane masks do not only fall in first class but the whole aeroplane and at the same time. Vaccine nationalism does not and will not work, in the long run, in curtailing the effects of the coronavirus. It confuses policymakers, and

the result is scapegoating and blaming the marginalised members of society for spreading the virus. If vaccine nationalism continues, it will lead to countries competing for the scarce vaccines, thereby driving the vaccine prices even higher, much to the detriment of the Global South, the majority of whom rely on the COVAX programme.

The reality is that pandemics are so devastating that they permanently alter human life in unimaginable ways. Pandemics are seismic events that have resulted in permanent changes, with political maps being redrawn, new identities being born, and some civilisations almost being driven into oblivion. In South Africa, the 1918 Spanish flu resulted in the blaming of Africans and Indians as the pandemic's main vectors, resulting in them being relocated and resettled in a geographical location now known as Soweto (South Western Townships). Racial segregation in South Africa resulted from the nationalist solutions to the 1918 Spanish flu. Today, South Africa has not yet recovered from the pandemic of racial segregation. Theologian Tinyiko Maluleke argues that the Covid-19 pandemic is not a medical issue but a religious, social and political challenge. He argues:

What could be more political than the introduction of Covid-19 into a country in which less than 20% of the population have medical aid, more than 30% are on social grants, and the real unemployment rate is above 35%? (Maluleke 2021).

The nationalistic response to the Covid-19 is seen in that Big Pharma made most of their money from Africa and Africans, who are their biggest clients with chronic medical conditions. Additionally, some of the Covid-19 vaccine trials were done on Africans, yet Africans will no longer be a priority population when it comes to benefiting from these vaccines. This demonstrates the exclusionary nature of nationalism. The Global South remains an open-pit mine for western multinational corporations to make huge profits and for their governments to benefit, especially through coloniality. Vaccine nationalism is a fallacy because the Global South underwrites the Global North, and it is in the best interest of the Global North to have those in the Global South vaccinated. Africa and other parts of the (formerly) colonised world are a huge global market, and their weakening will affect the global economy, human security and global public health. Faced with the Global North's vaccine negation, Africa has other options,

such as looking to the east, especially China, for vaccine salvation.

## **5. Which Way Africa: West's Vaccine Capitalism or the East's Vaccine Diplomacy?**

Who said the cold war was over? The Covid-19 pandemic taught us that the cold war changes its temperature, and when an event such as the Covid-19 pandemic occurs, the temperature increases. The Global North and its Big Pharma use vaccine nationalism; the east and its state-owned enterprises use vaccine diplomacy. Both vaccine nationalism and vaccine diplomacy are intended for domestic and foreign deployment. The West's vaccine nationalism will mutate into vaccine capitalism as a relic of their capitalistic and neo-liberal outlook, while the east's vaccine diplomacy continues the socialist look east mantra. Indeed, the more things change, the more they remain the same.

What is undeniable is that the Global South in general and Africa, in particular, are at the mercy of the economically rich countries of the Global North. Without its capacity of developing the Covid-19 vaccine, Africa must face either East or West; east to Russia's Sputnik or China's Sinovac or the West to Pfizer, AstraZeneca, and Moderna. Unfortunately, unlike the European Union, the African Union can not speak and act with one voice when such actions are needed the most. The ongoing squabbles over how to share the Covid-19 vaccine will fuel far-right-wing nationalism in western Europe and North America. Nationalism has been on the resurgence after the massive migration of Africans across the Mediterranean Sea towards Europe and South Americans, particularly from Honduras towards the United States, fuelling the rise of Trumpism and other 'me first' ideologies.

In seeking a response to whether Africa should face the West or the East, Nkrumah once answered emphatically and from a decolonial perspective that Africa must face forward. Africa needs ethical, just and nationalist leaders (Benyera, Francis, and Jazbhay 2020). If a nationalist loves her/his country, then the absence of the Covid-19 vaccine provided by Africans renders Africans unnationalistic. Arthur Mutambara crudely questions this lack of nationalism:

The tragedy of it all in the matter of vaccines is that no African country or Black-owned company is producing a Covid-19 vaccine. The African is an

observer - a subject and not a participant in vaccine development. This is a terrible indictment of all us people of African descent. Shame on us. How can 55 African governments, 1.3 billion Africans, a collective GDP of USD2.5 trillion, all these African businesses, universities, entrepreneurs, intellectuals and scientists fail to produce a single COVID-19 vaccine? This is beyond pathetic... We need to get our act together. With this inexcusable ineptitude, why should other nations take us seriously? Really? (Mutambara 2021).

That the WTO turned down the request by India and South Africa to have every country manufacture the vaccine without TRIPS penalties only makes capitalist and not welfarist sense. The hoarding of vaccines by predominantly western countries has had a crowding-out effect on emerging countries of the Global South seeking to access the same vaccines. Canada, the worst offender, has pre-ordered so many vaccines that it will be able to vaccinate each of its citizens six times over. In the United Kingdom and the US, it is four vaccines per person; and two each in the European Union and Australia (Dyer 2020). There is also global inequality in the prices charged for the same vaccine, with Western countries paying far less than African countries. This sustains the colonially inaugurated asymmetrical relationship between the West and the Global South.

The vaccines that have been made available to the developing world are either untested - such as the Chinese and Russian vaccines, for which insufficient clinical trial data has been released - or expensive. South Africa has ordered 1.5-million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine but will pay more than double what the EU pays per dose (Allison 2021). The claim by the EU that it is entitled to access the vaccine first because it contributed to the financial development of the vaccine negates the contribution played by African countries who provide the human beings on which the vaccine trials were done. Calling this practise vaccine apartheid, Allison notes,

The EU says that it is entitled to a lower price because it invested in the vaccine's development - never mind that the AstraZeneca vaccine was tested on the bodies of South Africans who volunteered to be part of the clinical trial in Johannesburg (Allison 2021).

After contributing human beings for the vaccine trials, the WTO refused the Global South permission to produce the vaccine using Big Pharma's patents. The countries that lead the denial of the vaccine patent waiver are the same countries

that are domicilium to Big Pharma. These wealthy nations, including the UK, US and Switzerland, are all home to major pharmaceutical companies who enjoy early vaccine access (Farge 2021). Here we note the use of Big Pharma as a source of foreign policy and soft power exerted on multilateral organisations such as the WTO and the WHO by Big Pharma's home countries.

## **6. Covid-19 Vaccine Soft Power and Diplomacy: Whither the Bomb?**

The Covid-19 vaccine has fast evolved into the latest currency for international relations and power politics with the potential of replacing the nuclear bomb as the ultimate currency and form of power in an increasingly nationalist world. Russia and China are busy approaching African countries to sign deals to supply them with the vaccine in exchange for many undisclosed Chinese and Russian concessions. Many countries of the Global South cannot afford the cost of the vaccine, and this is where Russian, and Chinese 'benevolence' will most likely result in these client states making huge concessions, especially natural resources-based ones, to secure the vaccine. For Africa, and as always, Russia and China will be waiting to benefit from Africa's misery by being the lesser evil. In exchange for having procured the vaccine from China and Russia, the two United Nations Security Council members will back these African leaders, some of whom despots wish to stay in power for longer, ostensibly for them to secure and deliver on the Chinese and Russian concessions. This is a typical win-win situation.

The Covid-19 vaccine will result in the diminished value in hard power epitomised in the nuclear bomb and the proportional rise in soft power wielded by those countries who can produce the vaccine. That most Covid-19 vaccines are not a once-off jab but have to be continually updated, just like computer software, will result in vaccine coloniality where those without the vaccine will be permanently beholden by those with the vaccine. As a form of soft power, both vaccine nationalism and vaccine diplomacy perpetuate the asymmetrical relationship which pits Big Pharma, western governments and the western controlled WHO on one side and the Global South on the other side. This is an archetype form of coloniality.

## **7. The World Trade Organisation and the World Health Organisation: Patenting Global Health**

The WTO and the WHO are creating complicated patented remedies out of which Big Pharma and other capitalist ventures will make super-profits at the expense of global health and the control of the pandemic. Granted, Big Pharma is not wellness or welfare programs but are capitalist profit-driven and opportunistic ventures which typically wait for years, investing millions in drug research and development to reap their delayed gratitude eventually. They thrive on managing long term diseases and pandemics. Stated crudely, pharmaceutical companies do not want people to be well but sick. They thrive from sick populations and not healthy ones. Is Big Pharma a threat to global and national security in times of pandemics?

Providing national peace and security is the prime responsibility of any government. The notion of national security dates back to Cicero's *maxim salus populi suprema lex est*, meaning the people's welfare is the highest law. A national peace and security threat is any activity or a phenomenon that destabilises or has the potential to destabilise peace and security. The concept of security evolved to a point where it is no longer militaristic and state-centred but citizen-centred, hence the notion of human security. What must be secured first are the citizens who will make a secure nation, which will make a secure world. National peace and security evolved from being nuclear weapon dependent to Covid-19 vaccine dependent, rendering the vaccine the greatest currency in international relations today.

Covid-19 is a threat to human peace and security by its nature and affects and infects large populations at a time. The threat is heightened by the technical withholding of the vaccine by Big Pharma. The availability of the Covid-19 vaccine at affordable prices at the right moments will mitigate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Efforts to render the vaccine unavailable through technical or other procedural impediments constitute a threat to international peace and security. One way that the vaccine is already being rendered inaccessible to the Global South is by patenting the invention. Big Pharma was responsible for developing this vaccine and insisted on their capitalist right to patent the vaccine and rip as much profit as possible.

On their part, the Global South through South Africa and India approached

the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) with a proposal that the patent rule is suspended so that the Covid-19 vaccine can be reproduced without adherence to patent regulations. Had the WTO agreed, this move could have immediately eased the global shortage of the vaccine. Big Pharma is a threat to international peace and security in so far as they influenced the WTO to refuse the request by the Global South to suspend the patent regulations provisionally. Western governments, Big Pharma, WHO, and the WTO are guilty of operating to make the vaccine inaccessible at the right time to the Global South. This constitutes the coloniality of the pandemic, i.e., using the pandemic to sustain colonial matrixes of power. The pandemic's coloniality is evident in how some western countries are hoarding the vaccine, some at levels that are six times more than their populations when a large chunk of the Global South is yet to receive the vaccines (Dyer 2020). Besides being used to sustain the colonial matrix of power, the pandemic also provided an opportunity for a global pseudo philanthropic elite to amass soft power over nations, especially those in the Global South, in the process, threatening their national sovereignties.

## **8. Global Elites, Soft-Power and Vaccine Philanthropy**

The Covid-19 pandemic has not only witnessed the vaccine assuming some soft power but has also seen the rise of billionaires as the new non-state actors. One of these powerful non-state actors is the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation which wrecked in millions of profits while masquerading as a philanthropic organisation. There is no facet of the Covid-19 where the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is not present. It is also one of the greatest funders of the WHO. As one of the most influential non-state actors during the pandemic, it is noteworthy that Bill Gates personally was one of those opposed to granting the patent waiver to companies of the Global South (Usher 2020; Dersso 2021). This contradicts his philanthropist persona, which in all fairness, is a public relations posture meant to give him access to the most influential policymakers. In a typical capitalist fashion, while racking in 18 billion in 2020, Bill Gates was at the forefront of denying countries of the Global South permission to produce the vaccine (Allison 2021).

## 9. The Other Side of Vaccine Nationalism: Vaccine Imperialism

First, a brief history of the development of the vaccine and how this life saving is a product of slavery whose inventors are never acknowledged, let alone remunerated, yet Big Pharma now make global noises about patents and research and development. The bottom line is that vaccination as a treatment was stolen from Africans by slave owners in the United States in 1721. This colossal injustice is well captured by Isabel Wilkerson thus,

They were not to be credited for their ideas or innovations, even at the risk of progress for everyone. Crediting them would undermine the pretext for their enslavement, meaning their presumed inferiority in anything other than servitude. In the summer of 1721, an epidemic of smallpox, one of the deadliest afflictions of the era, besieged the city of Boston. It sent stricken people into quarantine, red flags signalling to all who might pass, 'God have mercy on this house.' Cotton Mather was a Puritan minister and lay scientist in Boston and had come into possession of an African man named Onesimus. The enslaved African told of a procedure he had undergone back in his homeland that protected him from this illness. People in West Africa had discovered that they could fend off contagions by inoculating themselves with a specimen of fluid from an infected person. Mather was intrigued by the idea Onesimus de-scribed. He researched it and decided to call it 'variolation.' It would become the precursor to immunisation and 'the Holy Grail of smallpox prevention for Western doctors and scientists,' wrote the medical ethicist and author Harriet A. Washington (Wilkerson 2020: 231).

When the Covid-19 pandemic started to take its toll, especially in Europe, the first Instinct for these nations was self-preservation by closing their national borders. European Union member states quickly forgot how they were members of the prototype regional cooperation group in the European Union as they resorted to individualistic self-preservation measures to mitigate against the effects of the virus. This reaction or for resorting to national sovereignty while being a member of a regional grouping belies the notion of both the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) collective security paradigm. These countries quickly forget their otherwise recyclable maxim of 'a threat to one is

a threat to all' and how they agreed to collectively respond to any threats to one of their member states. This demonstrates how the notion of collective security is designed only to deal with political and military threats and not non-military threats to peace and security.

In the face of the pandemic, there has never been a Pan-European Union effort at addressing the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. How the European Union failed to coordinate the responses of its member states vilifies the United Kingdom for leaving the bloc and declaring openly that it is going nationalistic. Interestingly, when it came to the politics of the vaccine and its distribution, regional blocs such as the European Union and the African Union suddenly found their voices. When borders were being closed and Industries thinking they were nowhere to be found. What, therefore, is the purpose of regional organisations if they cannot coordinate their members at the hour of the most in need. The answer lies partly in the resilience of nationalism and largely in the economics of politics. The production and distribution of the Covid-19 vaccine is a global billion-dollar industry where every human being alive is a potential customer to be injected with the vaccine not once but at least twice.

The synergy between Big Pharma and regional blocs such as the European Union and the African Union points at the phenomenon of effects in imperialism. Imperialism uses the Covid-19 vaccine to further the capitalist Ventures and interest of especially Big Pharma domiciled in the Global North. And why the AU and the EU suddenly found their feet when the vaccine was being discussed is because there is money to be made. Global elites are licking their fingers at the sight of these billions. In countries like South Africa, which are suffering from state capture and endemic corruption, the vaccine will be the latest form of elite collusion and looting of state coffers at the expense of the poor majority. Appropriation and misrepresentation of the plight of the global weakest communities will be used as a front by these elites to steal and misappropriate resources meant to alleviate the suffering brought about by the pandemic. The executive impunity witnessed in South Africa extends the colonial mentality of seeing poor, dispossessed citizens not as human beings but as the dispensable other.

How countries individually banned travellers from certain countries belies the notion of collective security and the global common good. Each country applied its assessment standards of which citizens from which countries must be

allowed in. Again, this is a typical demonstration of the self-preservationist nature of nationalism and state sovereignty. The greatest lesson in international relations from how countries addressed the Covid-19 pandemic is that countries abandon multilateralism collective security in the face of an existential threat and instead turn to nationalism and state sovereignty to ensure self-preservation. Collective security is good when attacking abroad, such as NATO's attacks in Libya, but not when defending at home.

There are lessons for international relations from how Big Pharma has benefited from the vaccine and how multilateralism collapsed in the first pandemic. The seemingly coordinated efforts by the African Union and the European Union are positions which they were pushed into by Big Pharma so that Big Pharma can benefit from their destitution and desperation. The economics of the politics is such that Big Pharma wants to make once and for all, while the politics of the economics is that there will be much conniving and colluding between both the political and the economic elites. By grouping and cornering the countries, Big Pharma monopolises the production and provision of the vaccine and crowds out any other possible sources of the vaccine. Nothing is as profitable as a captive market, and COVAX delivers just that.

The COVAX facility comprises the who is who of the multi-billion-dollar pharmaceutical industry. Its member companies include AstraZeneca/University of Oxford, Novavax, GlaxoSmithKline, and Moderna. The COVAX agreement and the Advance Purchase Agreements (APAs) is not only crowded out other possible sources of the vaccine, but it has created vaccine imperialism. Countries and regions are bound into these advanced purchasing agreements for years to come. These advance purchase agreements will have a serious economic and political hangover, especially in Africa as Africa will be dependent on Big Pharma for its works in provisions by denying Africa vaccine in Independence. It is not overstretched to predict that future international travel will be based on one's inoculation status as a precondition for accessing certain countries. The soft power of the vaccine is that it will become a prerequisite for many things, such as attending mass events participating in global sporting activities and easily getting funding and scholarships. Humanity will be incomplete without inoculation. Certain industries and companies will require inoculation as a prerequisite for employment.

The decision by the world trade organisation to support a proposal by the

Global South led by India and South Africa to suspend the patent rules for the production of the vaccine demonstrates how the vaccine has gained soft power and became the latest and most powerful currency in international relations. Given a choice between supporting countries of the Global South and countries of the Global North backing Big Pharma, the choice for the world trade organisation was well cut out. The argument by the Global North is that there should be no patterns during pandemics. Stated differently: there are no profits during pandemics.

What Big Pharma and their Global North domiciled countries are doing is against all the rules and regulations of the World Trade Organisation and the WHO. These later operate on the most favoured nation (MFN) principle, while the latter emphasises the principle of accessible and equitable distribution of health resources. Of course, these principles are mere slogans in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic and the retreat of multilateralism in the first of the resurgence of nationalism.

Vaccine nationalism and vaccine imperialism actualised a typical win-win situation where the political elites will appear to be caring for their communities. In contrast, the capitalist elite will appear to be serving humanity from a catastrophic pandemic by providing the life-saving vaccine. Vaccine imperialism is also practised on members of the Global South that produced their vaccines, such as the Cuban vaccines Soberana 2 and Heberon Interferon-Alpha-2B. These vaccines are not even included in the global COVAX program. This exclusion is not based on science but politics.

The question of how to prioritise the limited doses of the Covid-19 vaccines that are available can be answered from many angles, such as the economic angle, where those who can afford it will buy the vaccine or a model being proposed here where those in need will be prioritised regardless of their economic political or religious status. This approach lends itself to those that categorise access to the Covid-19 vaccine as a fundamental human right. Studies have been done using mathematical models such as age and then stratifying the cohorts into prioritisation categories (Bubar 2021).

An egalitarian model for the distribution of vaccines based on the burden of the pandemic within the most affected communities, age group or cohorts being prioritised ahead of those least affected. Such a burden of disease approach would need centralised coordination by the WHO, who would map out the prevalence

of the pandemic and the concomitant proportional Vaccines that should be dispatched to specific geographies. Given that there is not enough vaccine for everyone globally, there is a need to prioritise those in most need and not those who can afford the most.

The reality that only ten countries have consumed 75% of the vaccines made so far shows how rampant vaccine nationalism is (Guterres 2021). These ten countries that have consumed three-quarters of the global vaccines comprised the world's economically and militarily advanced countries. The conclusion is that the vaccine is being accessed by the world's most powerful nations and not those in need of the vaccine the most.

## **10. What did Covid-19 Bequeath IR: On the Dozen Covid-19 Inheritances**

Pandemics always shape IR, and the Covid-19 pandemic was no different. In this section, I present a dozen uses and how the Covid-19 pandemic served in international relations. Firstly, the Covid-19 pandemic helped the international community retrace the west-east ideological lines. The European Union founder members who are predominantly from Western Europe deployed vaccine nationalism in allocating vaccines produced in their countries instead of sharing these doses with their EU counterparts who are predominantly from Eastern Europe attested that the west-east divide is still applicable. After being sidelined by Western Europe, EU member states from Eastern Europe had to realign themselves with the east, Russia and China. Listen for international relations here because the east-west divide needs a trigger to be redrawn and countries realigned to their former cold war allies.

Secondly, Covid-19 created new political identities: the vaccinated and the unvaccinated. Current debates about the relevance of a Covid-19 passport will be used to determine whether one should access certain amenities and services, such as flying into and out of certain jurisdictions. The Covid-19 passport or the health passport will emerge as one of the most important identity documents joining the national identity card and the passport. Increasingly other pandemics and screenable diseases such as yellow fever will be added to this health passport. The health passport will gain acceptability to a point where it will be an integral part of human identity, dividing the unhealthy from the healthy, the unwanted from the wanted and, in summary, entrenching what Walter Mignolo (Mignolo 2009)

termed the *Anthropos* from the *Humanitas*.

Thirdly, Covid-19 tested the doctrine of collective security. I hate that too presented as the Holy Grail of international cooperation the doctrine of collective security was never tested the way the Covid-19 pandemic tested it. What Covid-19 demonstrated was the fragility of collective security and the resilience of nationalism. When there is a threat to global peace and security, states react in a realistic and nationalistic manner by first ensuring their survival. As a doctrine of international relations, collective security is mainly efficacious if the threat is military.

Fourthly, Covid-19 also tested the efficacy of multilateral organisations, especially the World Health Organisation and the WTO. Never before has been a multilateral organisation such as the WHO at the forefront of fighting a global threat to peace and security. The WHO proved weak and prone to nationalist threats, especially by powerful nations such as the United States of America. The failure by the WHO to effectively coordinate a global response to the Covid-19 pandemic demonstrated that states are the most important and most powerful actors in international relations. This assumes the traditional realist doctrine that detects not only the most important but also the most powerful actors in international relations I heard of multilateral and other international organisations. States must therefore not rely solely on institutionalism implemented through multilateral organisations to solve their problems when there is a threat to global peace and security but must rather look at alternatives such as building South to South synergies.

Fifthly, during the Covid-19 pandemic, the efficacy of regional economic cooperation groupings such as the European Union, the African Union and sub-regional groupings such as the Southern Africa Development Community and its African counterparts were tested. When faced with a common regional threat which is non-militaristic, African states worked individually and in a very uncoordinated manner. The haphazard manner in which member states closed and open the borders and economies demonstrated their lack of operational effectiveness in the face of a common threat. This was an opportune moment for the Peace and Security Councils to coordinate responses and lockdowns to the pandemic at a regional level.

Sixthly, this period noted some convergence and contestations between science, politics and a bit of religion converging. Science and politics have had

an uneasy relationship, especially before the invention of the nuclear bomb. From that moment onwards, science and politics have played complementary roles in international relations. However, the Covid-19 pandemic the two came at loggerheads courtesy of populist politicians such as Donald Trump, who sought to deny the severity of the impact of the pandemic and discredit certain advice from scientists on how to mitigate the impact of the virus. Most countries were torn between scientific evidence and political expedience. This challenge was posed as livelihoods versus lives. While locking down economies would kill livelihoods, it would also preserve lives. The lesson here was that when political decisions and scientific evidence were not in tandem, it is always better to go with scientific evidence because most of it would have been tested and retested. Most scientists make these important decisions, such as determining the efficacy of vaccines or advising the presidency on whether to lock down the country and for how long would not have any political ambitions. The lesson here is that when science and politics clash, it is better for international relations to follow science, whether on climate change, Covid-19 or any other pandemics.

Seventhly, the Covid-19 period gave rise to a Pharma oligarchy, Big Pharma. Big Pharma is now an important player in IR, which will not relinquish its position. Future pandemics will continue from where Covid-19 would leave IR, i.e., in the hands of big Pharma. Eighthly, linked to the above, is that Covid-19 gave rise to new players in IR. Not only is Big Pharma a rising oligarchy in IR, but it is also one with massive power, which can be likened to the power of the nuclear bomb. The power of Big Pharma as a rising oligarchy was noted when countries from the Global South led by India and South Africa requested the WTO to suspend the patent rules for the production of the Covid-19 vaccine. Big Pharma felt that this was an infringement on their rights and lobbied the WTO to decline the request by the global South. The WTO's Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) is the multilateral instrument regulating patents. In essence, the TRIPS Agreement requires WTO member states to protect for a minimum term of 20 years from the filing date of a patent application for any invention, including a pharmaceutical product or process. That the TRIPS Agreement is hugely in favour of profit-seeking corporations and cast in stone demonstrates how few pharmaceutical companies have become powerful players in IR.

Ninthly, the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in creating a new soft power currency, vaccine soft power. The IR arena is always seeking and finding new currencies.

Vaccine soft power emerged as the alpha form of soft power in the pandemic. Russia and China traded their vaccine diplomacy for huge concessions, which would have taken many negotiations to achieve.

Tenthly, this period also noted that Big Pharma challenges the state's sovereignty. States and Big Pharma were mainly driven by differing motives in determining how to distribute the vaccines. Big Pharma mainly worked on a first-come-first-served basis. This system of allocating vaccines did not go down well with most governments, especially those in which Big Pharma produced the vaccines. States, especially those in the European Union, preferred a nationalistic logic that would have given them the right of first refusal for the vaccines produced in their jurisdiction.

Eleventhly, the world system inaugurated in 1492 remained unscathed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Whatever happened during the Covid-19 pandemic happened within the orthodox western model of the nation-state. Remote as they were, there were chances that the Covid-19 pandemic would result in a new world order or, at the very least, challenge the world system. While Big Pharma challenged state sovereignty, states remained resolutely realist. Euro-North American modernity as a process of managing the world system was enhanced rather than challenged as no alternative epistemologies, especially the epistemologies of the Global South, failed to challenge Euro-North American modernity. The world order still deals with challenges it faces in three main ways, it either 1) disciples, 2) assimilates, or 3) destroys. It will take a seismic event to change the world order, which remains hierarchical, western-centric, divisive, with a proclivity towards war and violence.

Twelfthly, and in peroration, a key lesson remains relevant in IR for the Global South since the inauguration of the world system in 1492. The world system was not *meant* for the Global South; it was *made* for the Global South.

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# Cyril Ramaphosa and the rhetoric of a coordinated African response to the Covid-19

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## Abstract

The unprecedented effects of Covid-19 have been felt in the whole world. The impact of the pandemic has drawn sharp fault lines of the world's inequalities. Covid-19 has changed the Global North and the Global South's social life, respectively. Whilst Covid-19 appeared to spread rapidly in certain parts of the world, and it seemed as if the pandemic would spare Africa. The state of world affairs has made African governments feel uncomfortable. Some African governments have started making pronouncements given the long-standing grievances about the region's status in global affairs. African governments have seen that the threats of the spread of Covid-19 demands collective and individual action. The geopolitical tussle leaves the developing countries stranded in the new economic order. Covid-19 has shaken the foundations of various institutions and states. Africa's profound failings are noticeable in public health, food security, governance and infrastructural development. Effective coordination of the Covid-19 crisis requires functioning state institutions, application of judiciary norms, and balancing power for the practice to adapt to the realities across the African continent. The second wave of Covid-19 requires the African Union to use this opportunity to integrate its economic pillars into the Africa-wide response strategy by using Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the sub-regional blocs of African countries that have existed for decades. The paper concludes that various isolated efforts made by African countries to deal with the disease and the failure of the continent to adopt a coordinated effort in responding to Covid-19 remain a major challenge. It then recommends that there should be a coordinated approach that goes beyond the rhetoric espoused by South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa in his capacity as AU Chairperson.

**Keywords:** covid-19, Cyril Ramaphosa, rhetoric, South Africa, realities

## 1. Background and Introduction

The unprecedented effects of Covid-19 have been felt in the whole world. The impact of the pandemic has drawn sharp fault lines of the world's inequalities. Covid-19 has changed the Global North and the Global South's social life, respectively. Whilst Covid-19 appeared to spread rapidly in certain parts of the world, it appeared as if the pandemic would spare Africa. A sharp contrast between the rich and emerging countries has emerged, which has plunged the impoverished and fragile economies into disarray. The impact of the pandemic has been exacerbated by socio-economic inequalities and the nature of the spread of the pandemic. Since the beginning of the virus, there has been over-reliance on science experts without input from human and social scientists, which scientists from the global north dominate. The state of world affairs has made African governments feel uncomfortable. Some African governments have started making pronouncements given the long-standing grievances about the region's status in global affairs. African governments have seen that the threats of the spread of Covid-19 demands collective and individual action. For the African continent, Covid-19 pauses a huge crisis. The situation is dire considering the catastrophic effects of the virus. The destructive potential of the virus has not been fully tested, and the truth about its humanitarian impact has not been revealed. Multilateralism that has been kept alive over the years is slowly fading away. The world is starting to disintegrate due to a rancorous geopolitical struggle. The geopolitical tussle leaves the developing countries stranded in the new economic order.

Covid-19 has shaken the foundations of institutions and states. Africa's profound failings are noticeable in public health, food security, governance, and infrastructural development. The virus's impact has varied considerably across the continent, reflecting countries' varying degrees of global integration and capacity to respond. One country that stands out in both regards is South Africa (Motala and Menon 2020). In South Africa, the implications of Covid-19 are serious. Hence, the responses to Covid-19 public health pronouncements had serious implications on the economic and social activities. Household income has been depleted, particularly for the vulnerable groups who depend on wage earnings for their livelihoods. Not only that the country found itself confronted by a virus that has infected more than a quarter of a million people across the

globe, but also by the prospects of a very deep economic recession that will cause businesses to close and many people to lose their jobs (Bell 2020). The realisation of the magnitude threat of the virus has forced South Africa to marshal every resource and energy to fight the pandemic. The actions by the government needed a concerted effort from business and other stakeholders in developing mitigating measures to respond and minimise the impact of the virus on the economy.

This article reviews relevant public and academic debates and literature to unpack Cyril Ramaphosa's rhetoric on covid-19. The paper seeks to navigate, discuss, and justify South Africa's leadership of African response to the disease and the challenges faced in delivering a coordinated African response to Covid-19. Moreover, this article seeks to understand how South Africa dealt with the uncertainty and unpredictability of the pandemic and how these experiences can inform the coordination of future crises in Africa. It refers to functioning state institutions, application of judiciary norms, and balancing power if the practice must be adapted to the realities across the African continent. The second wave of Covid-19 will require the African Union to use this opportunity to integrate its economic pillars into the Africa-wide response strategy by using Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the sub-regional blocs of African countries that have existed for decades. The paper looks at various isolated efforts made by African countries to deal with the disease. Lastly, the paper evaluates the failure of the continent to adopt a coordinated effort in responding to the Covid-19 menace and Ramaphosa's rhetoric on Covid-19.

## **2. Relevant Local and Global Issues Surrounding the Covid-19 Outbreak**

The effects of the pandemic are likely to be different between the affluent Global North and the impoverished Global South. The latter is more likely to be the 'hardest hit by the virus and face a debt crisis' (World Bank 2020:4). The impact of the pandemic was anticipated to have serious ramifications in Africa. This notion is true based on certain conclusions. For instance, Sanchez-Paramo (2020) asserts that the pandemic will hit emerging countries the hardest because of existing social and economic problems, pushing upwards of 49 million people into poverty, whom she refers to as the 'new poor.' So, based on the above conclusions, African leaders sought to demand to be heard in the world arena. The global

issues require the forging of ties and equitably conducting multilateral forums. However, traditional multilateralism is fragmented; hence African leaders need to reassess their role in the international system. In his national address for South Africa, President Cyril Ramaphosa (2020a) noted,

The world is facing a medical emergency far graver than what we have experienced in over a century. The World Health Organisation has declared the coronavirus outbreak as a global pandemic. Given the scale and the speed at which the virus is spreading, it is now clear that no country is immune from the disease or will be spared its severe impact. Never before in the history of our democracy has our country been confronted with such a severe situation. From the start of the outbreak in China earlier this year, the South African government has put in place measures to screen visitors entering the country, to contain its spread and to treat those infected.

Following his pronouncement, Ramaphosa cautioned that the Covid-19 cases would rise. In consultation with his cabinet, he warned that no half measures were taken. After careful consultation with his cabinet, Ramaphosa decided to take drastic measures to reduce and manage the impact of the virus on society and the economy and protect the people. The Disaster Management Act was activated to deal with the virus in a coordinated manner. Mechanisms embedded in the act were used to manage and prevent the spread of the virus.

In his proclamation, Ramaphosa (2020b) said,

We will also be able to set up emergency, rapid and effective response systems to mitigate the severity of its impact. Following an extensive analysis of the progression of the disease worldwide and in South Africa, Cabinet has decided on the following measures: Firstly, to limit contact between persons who may be infected and South African Citizens, we are imposing a travel ban on foreign nationals from high-risk countries such as Italy, Iran, South Korea, Spain, Germany, the United States, the United Kingdom and China as from 18 March 2020.

His pronouncements resonated well with measures taken by other African

countries. As African countries started cancelling flights from former colonial countries and putting their citizens under quarantine, the myth of Western invincibility fell apart, alongside its corollary that only the Global South is susceptible to infectious epidemics (Mwambari 2020). Following the World Health Organisation's announcement of the Covid-19 pandemic, Ramaphosa (2020a) announced that,

We have cancelled visas to visitors from those countries from today and previously granted visas are hereby revoked. South African citizens are advised to refrain from all forms of travel to or through the European Union, United States, United Kingdom and other identified high-risk countries such as China, Iran and South Korea. This is effective immediately. Government will continue to regularly issue travel alerts referring to specific cities, countries or regions as the situation evolves based on the risk level. Any foreign national who has visited high-risk countries in the past 20 days will be denied a visa. South African citizens returning from high-risk countries will be subjected to testing and self-isolation or quarantine on return to South Africa.

As a result, most governments were forced to start developing social and economic policies to ensure that their citizens cope with the new reality. The policies were meant to guard against the spread and effects of the virus and possibly curb future threats. The pandemic is not just a health crisis; it is a crisis of inequality and neoliberalism, a crisis of disaster capitalism and decades of austerity programmes and sustained attacks on fragile public systems and services provided by the state (Sayed and Singh 2020). However, adopting such drastic health measures was seen as being punitive and disruptive, considering that the poor depended on the informal sector for survival. So, adopting the all-securitarian model of 'containment' of northern countries, often without much care to specific contexts, many African countries have imposed a brutal lockdown upon their populations; here and there, violation of curfew measures has been met with police violence (Erondu 2020). African governments did not consider chronic poverty cauterising their populations in taking the austerity measures. Without being complacent, Africa has been faced with managing large health crises before, like the Ebola virus. The continent is not new to pandemics. So, African governments could have used their experience dealing with the Covid-19

crisis.

On 27 March 2020, different kinds of businesses remained closed. Those allowed to open were involved in producing essential goods and services. People were confined to homes; only those performing or obtaining essential services were given permits to leave their place of residence. Non-essential travel outside South Africa was prohibited for all spheres of government. Others who were allowed to leave their homes included those offering or receiving emergency care or chronic medication attention. Movement of people and commuter transport services between provinces, districts and Metropolitans was prohibited. Many fear for the future in this unprecedented historical moment, and Africans do too. However, while they will certainly also go through a tough period, they should see this crisis as an opportunity to fast track the process of decolonisation (Mwambari 2020). Therefore, African officials have become confrontational due to the pressure they are facing from the public in the wake of the increasing death toll and economic devastation. In response to Covid-19, the region's governments are tapping into public frustration about the virus's foreign origins, the shallowness of the international response, and overbearing public health guidance from countries that are failing to curb their own outbreaks (Devermont 2020). Covid-19 has dented the Western governments' brand enormously. The West has become the epicentre of the pandemic, turning the tide from China to Europe and now the United States of America. Thus, the western neoliberal and neo-colonial systems have suffered severely from what is regarded as a slow and haphazard response to the pandemic. In South Africa, when Ramaphosa(2020b) announced behavioural changes, he said,

We reiterate that the most effective way to prevent infection is through basic individual behaviour and hygiene changes. We are, therefore, once more calling on everyone to: wash hands frequently with hand sanitisers or soap and water for at least twenty seconds; cover our nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing with a tissue or flexed elbow; avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms. Everyone must do everything within their means to avoid contact with other people. Staying at home, avoiding public places, and cancelling all social activities is the preferred best defence against the virus. Over the past week, as we have been implementing these measures, the global crisis has deepened.

Whilst there was a malicious attempt to the African continent as lacking in basic hygiene, his pronouncement served to reinforce the seriousness of his actions. Although there are undeniable weaknesses in many African states and economies, including healthcare, this does not mean that there is no infrastructure or services, preparedness, resilience, creativity, local knowledge or innovation that are utilised in normal times and times of emergencies (Mwambari 2020). Surely, Ramaphosa's back to the basics approach signified a leader willing to educate the nation on basic hygiene practices..

### **3. Realities of Imposing Strict Lockdown Conditions in South Africa**

Covid-19 has devastated societies and reversed human development gains, triggering humanitarian and socio-economic crises. Every day, the magnitude of the crisis is becoming clear. The crisis has impacted human rights, peace and security, and human development heavily. The livelihoods of individuals have been disrupted, and inequality has been exacerbated. The ordinary people who earn their living menial jobs have found it difficult to eke a living. Unfortunately, the hard reality is that many lives will be lost before the pandemic is brought under control, and its wider ramifications will be felt for years to come. Its immediate and long-term impact on the developing world is expected to be massive (Erondu 2020). Due to its vulnerability, South Africa needs aggressive and concerted intervention to curtail the crisis. The increase in the number of people catching the virus has serious socio-economic ramifications. Therefore, a global approach to dealing with the crisis needs to be extended to South Africa and Africa in general. The African Union's Centres for Disease Control and Prevention has confirmed the increase in Covid-19 cases with a significant number of recoveries. Owing to a lack of testing capacity across the continent, with some countries having inadequate resources for conducting the tests, the numbers may be underestimated. To deal with the issue of testing, Ramaphosa (2020a) announced that his government would

further strengthen the health response: Government is strengthening its surveillance and testing systems. We are in process of identifying isolation and quarantine sites in each district and metro. Capacity is being increased at designated hospitals in all provinces. We are also increasing the capacity of

existing contact tracing processes. We are partnering with the private sector to set up a national tracking, tracing and monitoring system of all people infected with the coronavirus and those they have been in contact with. Because of the severity of this virus and its rapid spreading, government will make funding available to capacitate the sectors dealing with the national response to the Coronavirus outbreak.

The above pronouncement shows that African countries have shown leadership individually and collectively. The African Union has established an Africa Taskforce for Coronavirus (AFTCOR) to develop a unified continent-wide strategy and sectoral strategies to combat the virus. Its impact is being developed, and the African Member States are taking several measures to contain the spread of the virus and mitigate its socio-economic impact (Erondu 2020). The progression of the disease the world over shows that modelling an immediate, swift and extraordinary action is required to stop enormous human catastrophe. South Africa has made a significant effort in slowing down the virus using the rule of law. The provincial legislature plays an important role during this time as their constitutional mandate demands that they remain accountable to the legislature even in the execution of its authority at the national and provincial levels (Merten 2020). Although there were complaints regarding the chapter nine institutions, such as reports on violence, abuse and desperation, the South African institutions have performed exceptionally under the circumstances.

The stringent measures are taken to control the virus had a significant impact on rights, freedoms, and the repression of human rights. With a broad range of restrictions enshrined in the constitution, the army's use assisted in maintaining law and order. However, the deployment of the army was heavily criticised in some quarters. Ramaphosa's rhetoric has communicated the government's intention of managing the virus. The conflicting messages and communication breakdown between the Presidency and the Ministers showed the complexity of politics. The resistance shown by people in certain instances showed a lack of consultations regarding certain lockdown restrictions. Although the government's intention of sending messages was good, remote communities did not have access to information and in some cases practising safe distancing was not possible in informal settlements.

The economic impact of the lockdown restrictions reached a humanitarian

crisis, and in some cases, the lockdowns had more severe consequences than the pandemic they were meant to address. People in informal settlements lost their sources of income which was compounded by unemployment and poverty resulting from retrenchments. Many people became desperate for food, water, and other necessities. Furthermore, poor communities had challenges accessing health care services, medication, professional counselling, or helplines, particularly those with chronic illnesses and/ or disabilities who struggled to gain access to vital medications, assistive devices, counselling, and other services (Merten 2020). To deal with this problem, Ramaphosa (2020c) said,

We have introduced an economic and social relief package worth over R500 billion to help companies in distress, save jobs, and provide some income to informal workers and poor households. As of today, the R200 billion Covid-19 Loan Guarantee Scheme, which is guaranteed by the government, has begun to process applications from small and medium-sized businesses.

On their own, these negative economic shocks are sufficiently large to push many households into positions of food insecurity and led to an induced reduction in household capabilities resulting in severe shocks to household income rather than a shock to food availability, such as in a drought (Mwambari 2020). Since food insecurity was a result of a collapse in earnings, income transfers were done through social protection to counter the economic effects of lockdowns. The impacts of the crisis were minimised substantially through government transfers.

#### **4. Rhetoric of a Coordinated African Response to Covid-19**

Two opposing narratives emerged when the virus attached the Global North about Covid-19 and Africa. There was an assumption that the increasing number of people with the virus and the uncontrolled increase of Covid-19 infections and death would lead to the collapse of the health systems in Africa. The other school of thought was premised on the early action by African governments to limit the spread of the disease. Thus, subduing the disease was possible because of the young population and blocking the import of Covid-19 cases. However, to ensure regional and international cooperation, African countries

need to work together to protect human rights and the right to health of all Africans. Africa must collaborate in many areas, including accountability and transparency in using financial resources and dealing with mismanagement and corruption to understand the scale of the virus. To turn the tide of this virus, African governments need to respond appropriately to the virus. In dealing with the impact of the virus, Ramaphosa (2020a) said,

In the last few weeks, we have seen a dramatic decline in economic activity in our major trading partners, a sudden drop in international tourism and severe instability across all global markets. The anticipated effects of the decline in exports and tourist arrivals will be exacerbated by both an increase in infections and the measures we are required to take to contain the spread of the disease. This will have a potentially severe impact on production, the viability of businesses, job retention and job creation. Cabinet is therefore in the process of finalising a comprehensive package of interventions to mitigate the expected impact of COVID-19 on our economy.

Whilst the pronouncement by Ramaphosa may give some hope in South Africa and across Africa's fragile economic and health systems, environmental and social challenges. Therefore, this scenario is still concerning for individual countries that have, in general, overstretched healthcare systems during non-epidemic times (Erondu 2020). The African Union's Centre for Disease Control (ACDC) has responded to and mobilised resources, offering specialist training and government-specific guidelines. However, bigger tasks of caring for respiratory infections across Africa remains a challenge. President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa conceded that the pandemic and resulting lockdown measures have 'evoked a lot of anger and opposition' in his country. Many Africans have bristled under Western-style lockdowns are viewed as inappropriate in an African context (Devermont 2020). As shown above, the continent's economy lies mostly in the informal sector. As such, restrictive lockdowns as public response measures could result in serious livelihood damage that Covid-19 itself.

As the current African Union (AU) chairperson, Ramaphosa claims that the advent of Covid-19 has demonstrated that Africa can work together in solving its problems. Ramaphosa has blamed the West for handling the crisis, particularly the United States of America and Europe. However, the RECs could have done

better in sharing information expertise and streamlining the procurement of essential supplies across the continent. Even though the closing of borders had a devastating effect on the African economies, over forty-two countries closed their borders. An integrated African content could have led to the revival of economic activities if there was a carefully monitored re-opening. Thus, developing common agreements and quantifying financial risks amongst RECs is one rational thing to do. Existing free trade agreements within RECs could minimise losses and leverage the continent to economic prosperity. In one of his addresses, Ramaphosa (2020b) said,

We must therefore do everything within our means to reduce the overall number of infections and to delay the spread of infection over a longer period, what is known as flattening the curve of infections. Our analysis of the progress of the epidemic informs us that we need to urgently and dramatically escalate our response. Without decisive action, the number of people infected will rapidly increase from a few hundred to tens of thousands, and within a few weeks to hundreds of thousands.

Whilst Ramaphosa's focus was on South Africa, he needed to see beyond his own country. Orchestrating an intra-African recovery could bring a lifeline to the continent and revive the travel industry. Thereby preserving jobs, boosting imports and exports and mitigating Covid-19 macro-economic effects. Since the duration of the pandemic is unknown, the continent needs to make use of the trade blocs. Ramaphosa's emphasis should be on operating in a globalised world to ensure that Africa is politically and economically viable. While Africa may be at the begging of the trajectory, the AU should start to mobilise its sub-regional structures to coordinate and strengthen the continent's Covid-19 response strategy.

## **5. Some Implications Beyond Covid-19**

The post-Covid-19 period presents the continent with several things to ponder, particularly the economic and health policies. Clearly, the situation now demands a more nuanced and critical reconsideration of both national policy and international practice that simultaneously transcends the rhetorical smokescreen

erected by African leaders and directly challenges the traditional ambivalence of the international community (Oloka-Onyango, 1995). The pandemic has presented South Africa with an opportunity to step up and take the lead on issues to do with international politics. Countries like Kenya and South Africa have taken the lead on the blue economy, Gabon has distinguished itself on climate change and environmental problems. Through RECs, countries like Zimbabwe and Sudan have clamoured for the removals of sanctions. While this new crisis might be another challenging moment for African peoples, after the epidemic is over, the continent will have the chance to become more autonomous and self-reliant, as the West focuses on its own survival (Mwambari, 2020). The pandemic presents an opportunity to wean itself off neo-colonial relations that is exploitative in nature.

The African Union has an opportunity to integrate its economic pillars into the Africa-wide response strategy by using Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the sub-regional blocs of African countries that have existed for decades (Erondu 2020). The RECs include the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA), the Eastern African Community (EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC). These existing relationships, shared social and cultural characteristics and tied economic and trade interests can be a strong foundation for a larger and better-resourced African Covid-19 response (Erondu 2020). Pan-Africanism will also need to be rejuvenated. Following decades of shortcomings, it has to be reconciled. While the progress on continental integration has been slow, the reason has much to do with an orientation informed by the orthodoxy of market liberalism (Sayed and Singh 2020). The response to the crisis shows a lack of collective action in Africa.

Africa needs to have a well-defined strategy on public health governance, socio-economic issues and public policy. Thus, Africa needs a strong commitment to regional integration and multilateralism. For instance, Ramaphosa's decision to press the international financial institutions to support the region's fragile economies (Devermont 2020). Africa will need to re-evaluate best practices from the West and reconsider alternative future actions. RECs could play a part in coordinating the monitoring of border crossing activity, especially to align non-pharmaceutical interventions such as curfews, lockdowns, and rules on social

gatherings (Erondu 2020). At the same time, other trade arrangements within and outside the continent should be fast-tracked to ensure that continental trade is strengthened, which could allow the African Union or African regional blocks to assert their agency more globally (Mwambari, 2020). Coupled with this is the development of regional initiatives, covering, among other things, the human rights arena, the area of migration and refugees, as well as a renewed focus on conflict resolution and peacebuilding (Oloka-Onyango, 1995). Surely, these initiatives will lay a foundation for Africa to prioritise African markets, embark on innovative business approaches to local production and bring to an end the ‘resource curse.’ A major overhaul is needed across the continent to transition economies from relying on the extraction and sale of raw materials to the West (and East – i.e. China) and building up local industries that utilise local resources and turn them into value-added products for export (Mwambari, 2020). For instance, Ramaphosa (2020a) indicated,

Foreign funding should be gradually substituted with national funding drawn from taxation, repatriation of funds and new higher-value exports. It will also mean that African countries will have to stop importing foreign ‘saviours’ to help solve African problems. The continent has enough local talent and educated experts at home and in the diaspora to tackle challenges in a variety of fields and they would do it better than foreigners, because unlike them, they actually know very well the local context and specificities.

Africa has to generate value from its export and reduce over-reliance on borrowing. Whilst Africa has material and human resources to build its capacity for a prosperous continent for everyone, lack of political will and the extractive practices of external actors has been used as an excuse for inaction. However, the challenge for Africa is not about the restoration of its intellectual freedom and a capacity to create but sovereignty. Africa has to break away with the outsourcing of its sovereign prerogatives, to reconnect with local configurations, to break with sterile imitation, to adapt science, technology and research to its context, to elaborate institutions based on its specificities and resources, to adopt an inclusive governance framework and endogenous development, and to create value in Africa in order to reduce systemic dependence (Sayed and Singh 2020). Africa needs to start to solve its own problems. African leaders have to take a

radical direction to change the status quo. Covid-19 presents lessons to Africa to build its fiscal resources in good times to respond timeously during a crisis. As such, despite its devastating effects, Covid-19 is a wake-up call to African leaders to be innovative and adaptive to various situations.

## 6. Conclusion

The unprecedented effects of Covid-19 have been felt in the whole world. The impact of the pandemic has drawn sharp fault lines of the world's inequalities. Covid-19 has changed social life in the Global North and Global South, respectively. The impact of the pandemic was anticipated to have serious ramifications in Africa. Covid-19 has devastated societies and reversed human development gains, triggering humanitarian and socio-economic crises. The Covid-19 crisis has impacted human rights, peace and security, and human development heavily. The livelihoods of individuals have been disrupted, and inequality has been exacerbated. The ordinary people who earn their living through menial jobs have found it difficult to eke a living. The pronouncement by Ramaphosa may give some hope in South Africa and across Africa's fragile economic and health systems environmental and social challenges. However, the scenario is still concerning for individual countries that have, in general, overstretched healthcare systems during non-epidemic times. Clearly, the situation now demands a more nuanced and critical reconsideration of both national policy and international practice that simultaneously transcends the rhetorical smokescreen erected by African leaders and directly challenges the traditional ambivalence of the international community. The pandemic has presented South Africa with an opportunity to step up and take the lead on issues to do with international politics.

While this new crisis might be another challenging moment for African peoples, after the epidemic is over, the continent will have the chance to become more autonomous and self-reliant, as the West focuses on its own survival. The pandemic presents an opportunity to wean itself off neo-colonial relations that is exploitative in nature. Africa's profound failings are noticeable in public health, food security, governance and infrastructural development. Effective coordination of the Covid-19 crisis requires functioning state institutions, functioning state, application of judiciary norms, and balancing power for the practice to be adapted to the realities across the African continent. The second

wave of Covid-19 requires the African Union to use this opportunity to integrate its economic pillars into the Africa-wide response strategy by using Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the sub-regional blocs of African countries that have existed for decades. The paper concludes that various isolated efforts made by African countries to deal with the disease and the failure of the continent to adopt a coordinated effort in responding to disease, Covid-19 remains a major challenge.

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# South Africa's Curriculum Transformation: Insights from Post-Independence Africa and Post-Civil Rights Movement in the United States<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

The #MustFall campaigns, student-led protests that began at the University of Cape Town (UCT) in 2015 and reverberated across South African universities, ignited calls for curriculum transformation, the abolition of Eurocentric epistemologies, and the embrace of indigenous knowledge systems. Given that despite more than two-and-a-half decades of majority rule, South African universities continue to promote hegemonic Western thought, the call for genuine curriculum transformation is understandable. Against this backdrop, this article investigates the challenges associated with curriculum transformation efforts in South Africa. It offers potential solutions by drawing lessons from transformation efforts in the humanities in postcolonial African states and African-American studies in the civil rights movement in the United States (US).

**Keywords:** South Africa, Curriculum Transformation, Decolonisation, Africa, United States

<sup>1</sup> A synoptic version of this article appears in the introduction of a book this author co-edited titled: *From Ivory Towers to Ebony Towers: Transforming Humanities Curricula in South Africa, Africa and African-American Studies*. The copyright conditions of the book allow using material from the published chapter.

## 1. Introduction

The removal of Rhodes' statue in 2015 at the University of Cape Town (UCT) symbolises recent calls for curriculum transformation in South Africa. Although the country achieved black majority rule in 1994, South African universities continue to reflect the hegemony of Western models and paradigms. Post-apartheid policies towards transformation, such as the 1995 National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) and the 1997 Education White Paper 3, have not resulted in meaningful curriculum transformation (Bawa 2020). This begs several fundamental questions: Why has curriculum transformation not been successful in South Africa? What are the challenges, and how can they be addressed? What lessons can be drawn from other states?

It is against this backdrop that this article engages curriculum transformation efforts in post-apartheid South Africa by analysing the various policies as well as the bottlenecks that confront the transformation process, including the hegemony of Western thought and the alienation of black students. I argue that beyond the use of internally constructed policies to drive curriculum transformation in South Africa, it is critical to draw lessons from curriculum transformation efforts in the humanities in post-independent Africa and African-American studies in the era of the civil rights movement in the United States (US).

The end of colonialism in Africa in the 1950s and 1960s ushered in the golden age of curriculum transformation efforts on the continent, resulting in decolonial schools such as the Ibadan School of History, the Dar es Salaam School of Political Economy and the Dakar School of Culture. In the US, African-American Studies emerged during the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s to challenge notions of white supremacy and racist ideas and structures, leading to the establishment of two vibrant schools – the Atlanta School of Sociology and the Howard School of International Affairs. The experiences of African decolonial schools and the US' anti-racist schools offer potential lessons for South Africa's curriculum transformation efforts in the 21st century.

## 2. Election Administration and Voters Turnout

South Africa celebrated 25 years of black majority rule in 2019. While there has been a visible transformation in the composition of the country's governing

elite, other spheres, including economic and social frameworks, remain mostly untransformed. This is particularly evident in the country's higher education system, as South African universities continue to embrace international practices to be well-positioned in global university rankings (Dlamini 2016). Despite more than two-and-a-half decades of black majority rule, South African higher education embraces European models and paradigms. Paradoxically, concepts such as Africanisation, indigenisation, and decolonisation of the curriculum have become buzzwords, especially post-2015 (Mahabeer 2018). Nonetheless, in general, the country's universities continue to reflect Eurocentric, colonial, and apartheid designs and concerns have been expressed about the over-representation of white academics and Western scholarship in the upper echelons of academia (Garuba 2015).

The #MustFall campaigns, student-led protests that began at UCT in 2015 and reverberated across the country's universities, ignited calls for curriculum transformation, the abolition of Eurocentric epistemologies, and the embrace of indigenous knowledge systems (Ndelu 2020). The protests also raised issues around access, fees, and the slow pace of transformation across South African higher education institutions (Motala 2020). The student movements emphasised that South African higher education remains untransformed, evidenced by persistent racism and curricula ignoring African experience and context. The country's universities are thus seen as a site of oppression, where Western literature and Eurocentric world views are prioritised at the expense of African positionality. Universities are thus failing in their primary responsibility to enhance social change as higher education spaces continue to perpetuate marginalisation and exclusion (Kotze 2018). Lange (2017: 34) observes that:

If South African universities are to get anywhere in terms of addressing the unrealised aspects of institutional transformation that students and some staff are raising [...] It is necessary to explore more carefully the relationship between curriculum, knowledge and identity as currently they are being defined and see where universities stand in relation to these.

The apartheid regime's 'separate development' legacies are visible in South African higher education in the democratic era. In 1949, the apartheid government set up the Eiselen Commission on Native Education that was saddled with the

primary responsibility of modifying the content and form of the curriculum taught to black South Africans. Its recommendations led to the passing of the Bantu Education Act of 1954 that created a segregated schooling system and the subsequent 1959 University Extension Act that extended the Bantu education system to higher education institutions, giving rise to historically black universities such as Fort Hare, Limpopo, and Zululand. These universities were established to train black students – in fields such as teaching and administration – that would serve the colonial and later apartheid administrations to maintain their racist agenda. In other words, while white universities promoted white supremacy, black universities wallowed in the mediocrity of Bantu education as they trained black students to become servants to their white counterparts (Heleta 2016). Relative to historically white institutions such as the universities of Cape Town, Pretoria, and the Witwatersrand, these institutions are underfunded and ill-equipped, with negative impacts on the quality of research and teaching (Mngomezulu 2020).

While black students now account for the majority in South African universities, only 16 per cent of black youth between the ages of 18 and 24 are enrolled, and failure and drop-out rates are very high, with around 27 per cent of students completing their undergraduate and diploma programmes in regulation time and one in four students in contact universities either failing or dropping out in their first year of study (Vorster 2016; CHE 2016). The failure rate is racially skewed, with black students forming the majority of those that drop out and fail (Vorster 2016). A major contributor to this perennial problem is that the curriculum does not reflect the realities (particularly the lived experiences) of the black majority in South Africa but the hegemony of Western thought and white supremacy, alienating black students. The purpose of these universities – to promote white supremacy and the colonial project – persists. Another factor is the nexus between access to language and access to education. English is the dominant language of instruction in South African universities, disadvantaging black students whose home language is not English (Henricks 2016).

Since 1994, successive governments have adopted policies and initiatives to transform the South African higher education sector, including the 1995 NCHE and the 1997 Education White Paper 3. Several institutions have also been established to fast-track the transformation of the higher education system, including Higher Education South Africa (HESA) (established in 2005 and

now known as Universities South Africa) and the Centre for Higher Education Transformation (CHET). The CHET, in particular, aims to tackle the bottlenecks inhibiting transformation in this sector. However, South African universities remain significantly untransformed as Eurocentric worldviews remain dominant. This has led to calls for a curriculum that speaks to the socio-economic and political realities of the post-apartheid era. While curriculum transformation does not necessarily imply delinking from Western epistemologies, it advocates that Africa be at the centre of curriculum design and delivery. This manifests not only in the composition of academic staff but also in the curriculum content. The racial composition of an institution does not always determine success in terms of curriculum transformation. Transformation should go beyond fee reduction or free education, removal of statues of colonial administrators, and renaming institutions. Genuine transformation calls for serious engagement with knowledge production and delivery and a disruptive shift labelled a decolonial turn in the academic space (Garuba 2015). The necessity of a decolonial turn is illustrated by Eurocentrism's tendency to shape other people's thoughts, determine who is rational, and set the standards for publication (Zondi 2018). Indeed, attempts to disrupt the status quo often lead to sanctions such as work being rejected by publishers, failure to secure academic positions, and is regarded as an academic outcast (Zondi 2018).

South African universities have perpetuated Eurocentrism by the reward system, which offers academics financial rewards for publishing in accredited journals. While this is commendable, it suffers from two shortcomings. First, Western journals are more valued and rewarded (Melber 2018). Preference for international journals reinforces Western epistemic hegemony. Second, there has been an alarming increase in South African academics publishing in predatory journals that appear on an accredited list. While the bodies responsible for compiling lists of accredited publications are culpable, academics who publish in these journals are also to blame. Black students and academics are expected to assimilate, integrate, and conform to this discriminatory and alienating culture (Badat 2017). Essentially, universities are sites for South African students and academics to whiten up. Thus, the inclusion of black students and academics is not an emancipatory one but is of a subordinate nature (Badat 2017).

Post-apartheid South Africa has not taken the issue of curriculum transformation seriously enough. The period between the 1990s and 2001 was

concerned with three major objectives: access, equity and redress. Institutional frameworks such as the 1995 South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act, the 1996 National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE), the 1997 White Paper 3, and the 1997 Higher Education Act were established to achieve those objectives. The era from 2001 to 2016 was mainly associated with teaching and learning as extended programmes were introduced and efforts were made to improve teaching practices (Lange 2017). The focus was on language and academic literacy, neglecting the core aspects of curriculum transformation, such as the purpose of knowledge and a comprehensive review of the curriculum (Lange 2017). This put serious attempts at curriculum transformation on the backburner. 'For profound curriculum change to occur in higher education and in particular teacher education, there has to be a deliberate shift away from a position of instrumentalism and reaction, and an exercise of counting numbers; towards a deep intellectualism of the curriculum' (Mahabeer 2018: 2). This statement is apt, given the pressure on universities to increase the enrolment of black students and recruitment of black academics.

Earlier decolonial and transformation efforts include attempts by academics like the late Archie Mafeje, who vigorously argued for curriculum reforms in 1968 (Mngomezulu and Hadebe 2018) and the 1976 student protests against the use of Afrikaans as the language of instruction in schools and oppressive Bantu Education. The development of isiZulu and isiXhosa as languages of instruction at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) and Rhodes University are recent concrete attempts towards decolonisation (Rossouw 2018). It is believed that the use of indigenous languages will facilitate a better understanding of academic concepts and theories and also enable students to relate well to content as many think in their indigenous languages. However, it remains to be seen if these efforts will yield the desired results, given the slow pace of implementing this initiative. Jansen (2017) highlights specific activities across South African universities that reflect some level of curriculum transformation, including cardiovascular research at UCT championed by Bongani Mayosi and AIDS research at UKZN led by Quarraisha Abdool Karim and Salim Karim. These programmes are well funded, not controlled by Western knowledge agencies, and African students across the continent enrol in them.

Transformation of the humanities should take into cognisance the need to draw on the ideas that have shaped contemporary South Africa, including

indigenous, precolonial, colonial, postcolonial African, and Western ideas. There is also a need to rethink research methods and methodologies because Western epistemic dominance rested and has continued to rest on them (Zondi 2018). South African academics' attitudes towards the curriculum regarding the teaching and learning process are equally germane. This prompts Vandeyar (2019) to ask critical questions: 'Are they ready to unlearn, re-learn and fundamentally transform as individuals and academics? Are they literate about the historical injustices and diverse intellectual debates within their disciplines?' Clear answers to such questions are essential to determine the direction of South Africa's curriculum transformation efforts.

The 1997 Higher Education Act notes the need to redress past discrimination and ensure representativeness and equal access. However, the overarching theme of curriculum transformation debates is the re-awakening of indigenous knowledge, practices, and languages that have been relegated to the background. It is important to embrace Afrocentric scholarship to thwart Western episteme's hegemony. While Western scholarship is critical for the development of the West, it does not sufficiently capture the African experience (Matthews 2018). Nevertheless, it is crucial to strike the right balance between Africanisation, Westernisation, and globalisation. Against this backdrop, Higgs (2020) argues for the revival of indigenous African knowledges – which have been relegated to the backburner – in the quest for curriculum transformation in the discipline of philosophy. This is critical for South Africans' socio-economic circumstances to find expression in the country's educational spaces. In contrast to scholars who have argued for Africa to delink from Western thought, Higgs advocates for what he refers to as a 'fusion of epistemologies', a synthesis of indigenous African knowledges and Western epistemologies.

Transformation, especially in curriculum, language and access, is thus crucial if South Africa is to confront contemporary challenges such as high levels of poverty and inequality (Mthembu 2019). In other words, curriculum transformation is critical to societal transformation. Indeed, the education system was used by the apartheid administration to perpetuate discriminatory and segregation policies. Accordingly, higher education institutions should play a pivotal role in addressing the challenges that confront contemporary South Africa.

The salience of transformation stems from the hegemonic notion that

Western epistemologies are universal and that indigenous knowledge systems are of less value. This is evident in the neglect of traditional knowledges and indigenous languages. Decolonisation and transformation thus connote the struggle against epistemicides with the ultimate objective of understanding other knowledge systems such as the African philosophy of *Ubuntu* (Mahabeer 2018). Le Grange (2016) highlights five key factors that could transform the South African curriculum. The first is assessing the relevance of Western disciplines to the domestic context, while the second is trans-disciplinary knowledge that incorporates indigenous communities. Thirdly, the curriculum should reflect local and regional realities and fourth; students should be taught about the cradle of humankind. The fifth factor is drawing lessons from the Inter-cultural University of the Indigenous Nations and Peoples in Amawtay Wasi, in Ecuador. The last-mentioned approach – learning from the experiences of other countries – forms the crux of this article. Beyond using internally constructed strategies to foster curriculum transformation in South Africa, it would add value to draw lessons from the curriculum transformation efforts of other African countries and African-American studies in the US.

### **3. Insights from Post-Independence Africa**

Given that quality education results in the mastery of one's environment in pursuit of innovation and advancement, Western colonialism robbed Africa of this benefit as the continent's originality and authenticity, particularly in the area of lived experiences, cultural values, and indigenous knowledge system, were relegated to the back burner (Ezeanya-Esiobu 2019). The end of colonialism on the continent in the 1950s and 1960s witnessed the rise of struggles to transform its universities in light of the realisation that students were being exposed to European history, politics, geography and literature as opposed to an Africanised curriculum, disregarding the continent's precolonial scientific, literary, and other achievements. Africa was portrayed as a primitive, inferior, barbaric, and incapable continent that needed Western civilisation (Jansen 2017). In 1952, the Advisory Committee on Education in British Tropical Africa observed that the education in the British African colonies reflected the content of the English elementary school as opposed to the African environment (Ndille 2018). Hence, the quest to transform African higher education. As Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2017: 61) notes: 'This

struggle entailed formulating a new philosophy of higher education informed by African histories, cultures, ideas, and aspirations as well as a fundamental redefinition of the role of the university.' This marked the most important era in curriculum transformation efforts in African higher education, evident in the rise of leading scholars such as Nigeria's Kenneth Dike, Guyana's Walter Rodney, and Senegal's Cheikh Anta Diop, who championed decolonial schools, including the Ibadan School of History, the Dar es Salam School of Political Economy, and the Dakar School of Culture, respectively. These centres used rigorous research techniques such as nationalist historiography and oral sources to challenge Eurocentric epistemologies. Their academics drew on nationalist historiography to debunk colonial epistemological depictions of Africa.

Falola (2020: 214) defines African nationalist historiography as

an academic and cultural movement seeking to redefine the African identity by fiercely defending Africa's past and looking to it as inspiration for future progress. African nationalist historiography is about the authority of Africans calling out the racism and wrongs accumulated against them. For this reason, it is also about resistance. Rather than cowering before the oppressor, African nationalist historiographers fight against the oppressor, as their ancestors did when they fought for their own independence. To clarify: African nationalist historiographers do not want to eliminate Europeans from history altogether. That would rewrite history completely, which is not their aim. They aim to focus not on the Europeans' impact, but rather on the African response to it.

Prior to the emergence of the Ibadan School of History at the University College, Ibadan, Nigeria, the history curriculum and, by extension, the university's curricula were framed by the University of London; they were thus Eurocentric and reflected British values (Omer-Cooper 1980). Kenneth Dike provided leadership in the decolonial school as his Afrocentric publications utilised archival materials, African oral tradition and nationalist historiography to debunk the hegemony of Western epistemology and depict African achievements (Falola 2020). Dike took full advantage of his emergence as the university's vice-chancellor as he mobilised the history department to promote nationalism and recruited many Nigerian academics to diminish the influence of Western

scholars on the institution's transformation strategies (Falola 2020). Beyond its imprint on history departments across Nigerian universities, the Ibadan School of History also influenced the curriculum of Nigerian secondary schools as history textbooks adopted nationalist historiography (Omer-Cooper 1980).

Then-President Julius Nyerere's Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) adopted an African socialist ideology which was a bold alternative to Western capitalism. The 1967 Arusha Declaration underscored Tanzanian policymakers and citizens' commitment to socialism and self-reliance. In an early sign that the declaration would filter into the University of Dar es Salaam's curriculum, a meeting between representatives of the university, policymakers, and members of the ruling party on the role of the university in the state's socialist ideology was held a month after its proclamation (Rugumamu 2020). The university was urged to produce knowledge that promoted socialism and self-reliance and tackled domestic socio-economic challenges (Rugumamu 2020). Within this context, the Dar es Salaam School of Political Economy emerged, boasting of distinguished scholars such as Walter Rodney and Jacques Depelchin. They adopted a radical political economy approach in their teaching and research as they transformed old and introduced new curricula and programmes that Marxian Political Economy underpinned. The school ignited revolutionary consciousness among Tanzanian youth through its 'Great Debates' that attracted African scholars such as Dan Nabudere, Archibald Mafeje and Mahmood Mamdani (Rugumamu 2020).

The Diop-led Dakar School's contribution to nationalist historiography can be summed up in two fundamental notions: 'first, Africa is the Cradle of Humankind and human civilisation; and second, there is a profound historical, linguistic, anthropological and cultural unity among African peoples' (Mboup 2020: 257). However, these schools were criticised on many levels. The Ibadan School was chastised for presenting a narrow historical perspective, while detractors pointed to the Dar-es-Salaam school's emphasis on economic determinism.

Beyond the efforts of these scholars and their schools, many first-generation African scholars vigorously fought Western epistemological dominance. They included political scientists such as Ali A. Mazrui and Claude Ake; anthropologists such as Archibald Mafeje and Maxwell Owusu; geographers like Akinola Mabogunje and Simeon Ominde; historians including Adu Boahen and Jacob

F.A. Ajayi; and literary icons such as Chinua Achebe, Ousmane Sembène, Ngugi wa Thiongo, Okot p'Bitek, and Wole Soyinka (Arowosegbe 2014a). South Africa can draw lessons from these African countries and create similar schools and adopt research techniques such as nationalist historiography and oral sources to capture the socio-economic and political realities of contemporary South Africa. The newly launched Thabo Mbeki African School of Public and International Affairs at the University of South Africa, which seeks to train thought leaders and change agents towards the development of Africa, is critical in this regard. Indeed, post-apartheid South Africa continues to suffer from the legacies of the colonial and apartheid periods, and its universities serve as a microcosm of the realities in the wider society. As the case of Tanzania's President Julius Nyerere shows, a charismatic South African leader committed to genuine societal transformation and mobilising the country's universities towards this end is critical to the realisation of de-Westernisation and Africanisation.

At a conference organised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia, in 1961, African leaders agreed that the rise of consciousness of African values would only be achieved if there was a deliberate attempt on the part of each state to conduct research on African tradition and ways of thought (Ndille 2018). Other seminars such as the 1963 Tananarive conference and the 1973 Accra conference were organised to engage how African universities could promote African identities because of their colonial heritage (Ndille 2018). The efforts of various academics and universities resulted in the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) in 1973. The Council's pan-African publications that underscore African values and contexts have significantly enhanced African scholarship's global visibility and accessibility (Nyamnjoh 2019).

For CODESRIA, a relevant African university that champions African values and predicaments, is one that enjoys academic freedom as articulated in its various declarations. By academic freedom, CODESRIA understands full autonomy of thought and practice at the service of knowledge production on the African condition and of relevance to African predicaments. It is also about facilitating unlimited access to the knowledge thus produced. CODESRIA thus relates to universities as autonomous institutions: Free from the logic and practice of those who expect to call the tune merely because

they finance research, publication, and teaching (Nyamnjoh 2019: 8).

Against this background, CODESRIA funds research that promotes the Council's pan-African vision and mission (Nyamnjoh 2019) to curtail Western funding bodies' influence on African scholars' academic freedom.

However, the efforts of these schools of thought, centres and first-generation scholars have been eroded as many African universities continue to perpetuate the hegemony of Western thought and wallow in epistemic crises as seen in perpetual academic dependence on Europe and the US. Africa's research funding compounds this, and its volume of internationally recognised publications are infinitesimal (Arowosegbe 2014b). This challenge was especially daunting in the 1980s when the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank imposed structural adjustment programmes. The significant negative impact on African higher education was seen in the rise in fee-paying institutions, departmental autonomy instead of centralised administration, and a market-friendly curriculum that led to increased fees and a colonised curriculum (Mamdani 2018). The emergence of military regimes and the attendant human rights abuses and Cold War politics across Africa further dampened academic freedom (Mazrui 2003).

Although most African universities have successfully Africanised their academic staff profile, they have failed spectacularly to Africanise their curricula despite many attempts towards transformation (Nyamnjoh 2019). This is complicated by the continued use of colonial languages such as English and French as the medium of instruction, relegating indigenous languages to the backburner despite increasing evidence that indigenous languages enhance students' understanding of content and, by extension, performance. Indeed, rather than having African cultural and language centres across African universities, what is visible across these institutions is non-African centres such as China's Confucius Institute and France's Alliance Française. The overarching effect is the African humanities' limited influence in society as these disciplines cannot shape societal directions and struggle to offer lasting solutions to societal challenges.

These are pitfalls that South African universities should avoid. While their research funding is relatively high compared to most African universities, conscious efforts are required to ensure its sustainability. Furthermore, unlike most African counterparts, the top echelon in South African universities remains

largely white, hindering transformation. Like other African states, South Africa has also struggled to transform the curriculum. This herculean task requires serious commitment from all stakeholders, including policymakers, academics, and students. Like other African states, the use of a colonial language – English in the case of South Africa – as the primary medium of instruction remains a challenge. Thus, efforts by universities such as UKZN and Rhodes to develop indigenous languages should be encouraged and emulated by other institutions.

Western epistemology is characterised by methodological and ideological bias that manifests in teleological thinking and equating the Western ideal to reality. While the former practice symbolises the developmental or historical analysis of society – from a primitive one (Africa) to a developed one (Western); the latter notion presupposes that Western society is the ideal (Ake, 1979). Therefore, true curriculum transformation in Africa must provincialise Europe and deprovincialise Africa. While provincialising Europe connotes a drive towards counteracting ‘Europeanisation of the world’ by unequivocally revealing that European epistemology reflects knowledge from one geographical centre, deprovincialising Africa entails putting the continent at the centre in our interpretation of the world (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018). The West remains the generator and exporter of concepts and theories tested in Africa. It continues to attract many students from Africa, and African scholars continue to pride themselves on validation of their scholarship in the West through publication in so-called ‘high impact journals’ (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018). Ali Mazrui (2003: 147) poignantly notes that ‘African universities have been the highest transmitters of Western culture in African societies. The high priests of Western civilisation on the continent are virtually all products of those cultural seminaries called ‘universities’’. This has led to scientific dependence, culminating in research without invention (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018) and teaching without originality.

Using neo-liberalism and neo-Marxism as case studies, Oyovbaire (1983) points to the tyranny of borrowed paradigms. He argues that while neo-liberalism was a legacy of colonialism, neo-Marxism represented an ‘intellectual import-substitution’ that critiqued neo-liberalism. Both paradigms were adopted and championed by African academics to explain African realities, ignoring the continent’s unique features (Oyovbaire 1983). Against this backdrop, Ake (1979) argues that Western social science perpetuates imperialism, although it embraces a subtle academic rather than a forceful economic form. Ake (1979: xiv)

highlights that Western social science

continues to play a major role in keeping us subordinate and underdeveloped; it continues to inhibit our understanding of the problems of our world, to feed us noxious values and false hopes; to make us pursue policies which undermine our competitive strength and guarantee our permanent underdevelopment and dependence. It is becoming increasingly clear that we cannot overcome our underdevelopment and dependence unless we try to understand the imperialist character of Western social science and to exercise the attitudes of mind which it inculcates.

Of particular concern is that some African scholars continue to adopt an intellectual tradition that has become globally obsolete and is patently unsuited to African circumstances (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018). 'A whole generation of African graduates grew up despising their own ancestry and scrambling to imitate the West. Those early African graduates who have later become university teachers themselves have on the whole remained intellectual imitators and disciples of the West' (Mazrui 2003: 142-143). Ugandan academic Mahmood Mamdani (2018) poignantly illustrates how modern African universities have relegated African values and institutions to the background and replaced them with a Western model characterised by a gated community with three major groups: academics, administrators, and students. He argues that the African university emerged as an integral part of the Western colonial agenda to build institutions and individuals to champion 'excellence,' irrespective of the domestic context. However, after World War II, intellectuals emerged that prioritised relevance over excellence. These scholars were primarily concerned with the specificities of their domestic context (Mamdani 2018). The efforts of this generation of African academics have largely vanished. This is another important lesson for South Africa. It is not only important to call for curriculum transformation; all and sundry must internalise the process in order to guarantee generational mobility.

Contemporary African universities continue to confront colonial legacies evident in monolingualism and the rabid adoption of Western standards. Thus, 'the most serious challenge for the universities in Africa today speaks to the need to simultaneously Africanise global scholarship while also endeavouring to globalise African scholarship' (Arowosegbe 2014b: 243). African universities must

position themselves to build theories that explain and predict the continent's realities rather than relying on imported theories and models designed for the Western context. Africa also needs to embrace the development of indigenous languages as the medium of instruction and curtail the neglect of these languages and the hegemony of Western languages in the classroom (Mboup 2020). More importantly, African countries need to develop their universities and vice versa as higher education is critical to development. They must also be well funded to conduct rigorous research, improve teaching techniques, and attract and retain the best academic minds. 'In reality, no university is ever able to help develop a society unless the society is first ready to help develop the university. It is a symbiotic relationship' (Mazrui 2003: 135). In other words, transformation efforts encompass a strong relationship between the university and society.

Transformation of the African higher education landscape has manifested in replacing foreign staff with African academics and the proliferation of modules that engage contemporary African issues (Onuka 2017). However, effective and efficient transformation will require the continent's higher education institutions to look inward. This could be achieved by embracing academic exchange programmes to learn from one another (Onuka 2017). In doing so, each institution should be cognisant of its comparative advantage. African universities could play a critical role in championing and achieving some of Africa's aspirations, including sustainable development and self-reliance, which are crucial aspects of the continent's various development plans, with Agenda 2063 being the most recent.

#### **4. Lessons from African-American Studies in the US**

The African-American scholar, Molefi Kete Asante, has often argued that the education offered to African-Americans alienates them from their culture and traditions and glorifies Western culture. An emancipatory education would consider the need to engage Africa and America's history using Afrocentricity as a framework. Thus, teaching and research must be framed from an African standpoint. This implies that African-Americans should be the subjects rather than the objects of education to counteract inferiority and marginalisation (Asante 1991). Asante (1991) identifies white scholars and black cohorts who write on multiculturalism whose underlying agenda is to impose Western views

on other regions. These scholars resist and obliterate meaningful transformation and defend white privilege in universities.

Historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) were founded primarily to offer education to African-Americans. In a country that confronts racial discrimination, HBCUs seek to, among other things, maintain black tradition; serve as a source of leadership for the black community; and produce competent black graduates (Brown and Davis 2001). Similar to the realities in apartheid South Africa, before the American Civil War (1861-1865), higher education was racially segregated, and African-American students were denied access through institutional and legal frameworks such as Jim Crow and Black Codes (Allen et al. 2020). No wonder then that by the end of the Civil War, literate African-Americans only accounted for 5 per cent of a population of around 4.5 million (Brown and Davis, 2001). The end of the Civil War saw the burgeoning of HBCUs. However, in contrast to the realities in South Africa's post-apartheid era, there was significant financial support for HBCUs in the post-Civil War period, and they emerged as veritable sources of socio-economic and political mobility among black Americans (Allen et al. 2020). Thus, these institutions are critical to African-American influence and roles in an exclusive and discriminatory society. Nevertheless, HBCUs remain underfunded compared to historically white universities and colleges (HBCUs). Indeed, before the 1960s civil rights movement, most African-American scholars were recruited by black institutions that had a reputation for heavy workloads and minimal research incentives (Banks 1992). Nonetheless, these scholars were influential beyond the classroom, with many seeking to make a meaningful contribution to society. For example, George Williams emerged as a legislator in Ohio, DuBois was instrumental in the Niagara Movement and the establishment of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), and Frazier was a civil rights activist who championed the struggle for equality (Banks 2001). It is against this backdrop that African Studies emerged in the US. The Ford and Rockefeller Foundations and the Carnegie Corporation contributed by funding research, curriculum development, and recruitment of academics (Ferreira 2010).

In summary, the development of African studies was directly linked to the independence of African countries and the civil rights movement in the US in the 1960s (Ferreira 2010). While independence resulted in more African students attending American universities, the civil rights movements ignited the entry of

African-Americans to predominantly white universities and colleges. However, these students and academics were shocked by the racism they experienced in these institutions. This led to the embrace of Pan-Africanism and calls for curriculum transformation, relevance, and social justice (Zezeza 2011). However, some of these African scholars were insensitive to the racism in US academia as they internalised the stereotypes of African-Americans, thereby becoming accomplices of European Americans, a relationship that resulted in some African academics enjoying a preferential treatment in recruitment and promotion (Zezeza 1997). This is an important lesson for African academics in South African universities. It is critical for them to be conscious of the racial dynamics that play out in South African higher education institutions. Indeed, these dynamics often created subtle bad blood between black South African and African academics.

Cold War politics propelled interest in African studies and area studies. Aside from funding received from the foundations mentioned above, the US government was actively involved in developing this discipline to promote national security and global hegemony. For example, the 1958 National Defense Education Act VI provided for the teaching of African languages (Ferreira 2010). Thus, African studies during this period was determined by US foreign policy as the imperial power attempted to universalise Euro-American knowledge across the globe, including Africa.

It should be noted that African-American scholars in HBCUs developed African studies and African-American studies long before they gained traction in HWCUs in the Cold War era. Western scholars did not consider Africa as a continent worthy of academic inquiry during this period. African-American scholars exposed the economic and epistemic violence perpetuated by American racism and revealed African-Americans' remarkable contributions to the development of the US (Zezeza 2011). While African studies – dominated by European Americans – engaged Africa from the perspective of modernisation and development, African-American studies – dominated by African-Americans – explored the continent from the lens of the ancient past and Africa's connection with the diaspora (Zezeza 1997). African-American studies emerged in the US as a Pan-African project and focused on decolonisation in Africa and civil rights struggles in America in the post-World War II era (Zezeza 2011). It is against the backdrop of the gains of the civil rights movement that African-American studies was imposed on many higher institutions in the US and was widely perceived as

‘the child of an illicit relationship between social struggle and the conventional disciplines’ (Hanchard 2004: 140). At the top US universities, African-American studies were situated in basements and dilapidated buildings and were at the margins of administrative considerations. However, African-American studies began to rise to prominence in the late 1990s (Hanchard 2004).

Its main proponents were scholars such as Edward Blyden from the Caribbean and African-American W.E.B Du Bois, who challenged Eurocentrism, colonialism, and racism in Africa and the US. They noted the centrality of Pan-Africanism to liberate Africa and the US from colonial and racial oppression, respectively (Zezeza 2011). Two important schools emerged, namely, the Atlanta School of Sociology championed by individuals such as Du Bois and Richard Wright, and the Howard School of International Affairs with prominent scholars such as Ralph Bunche and Merze Tate. Both relied on rigorous research techniques – surveys, field interviews, and ethnography – to debunk the notion of black inferiority. The onus lies with South African academics to take a cue from this approach to confront the ubiquitous legacies of apartheid in higher education.

The Atlanta School of Sociology proved that black people could develop agency in pursuit of the decolonisation of the mind despite intense oppression and domination, illustrated by conscious efforts to construct inferior black institutions instead of well-equipped institutions to maintain white supremacy (Wright 2016). The radical school emerged in the 20th century in a black community and was successful due to the support it received from Atlanta’s black community. Its academics were predominantly black and not well remunerated, with limited access to research facilities compared to their white counterparts (Wright 2016). Through innovative research, the Atlanta School of Sociology debunked the intellectual foundation of scientific racism. It offered an alternative narrative of the causes and effects of racism, particularly the impact of white oppression and segregation on blacks’ low status in society (Morris 2020). In doing so, the school was guided by a fundamental principle – ‘accurate scholarship would prove black people were not inferior, thus laying the grounds for black activism and the building of a liberation movement’ (Morris 2020: 351). It relied on rigorous research techniques, including field interviews, ethnography, and census analysis, to engage black people’s socio-economic and political circumstances (Wright 2016). The Atlanta School of Sociology’s contribution to knowledge has four pillars: first, African-Americans were equal to their racial

counterparts as racial oppression as opposed to biological traits informed the low status of black people. Second, 'black crime' was a misnomer as social conditions rather than racial traits determined crime. Third, the black community was not homogeneous as there were many social classes with different circumstances. Finally, the black church played a dominant role in promoting the culture of the community (Morris 2020).

The Howard School of International Affairs engaged in 'first, problematising hegemonic paradigms, theories and schools of thought; second, demythologising history; and third, decolonising knowledge production' (Johnson 2020: 358). It engaged hierarchy as the crux of the pecking order of the international system and its implications for slavery and colonialism (Henderson 2017). Howard scholars also made an important contribution to the way the North-South gap is viewed by stressing relational research, which explains the nexus between the wealth of the North and the impoverishment of the South. Like the Atlanta School of Sociology, the Howard School opposed the narrative of race as a biological trait and emphasised that it is a social construct. While realism, which emphasises the anarchical nature of the international system and power politics between states, was the dominant theoretical lens of international relations, Howards scholars, led by individuals such as Ralph Bunche, underlined the place of racism in the hierarchical structure of the international system (Johnson 2020). They, therefore, challenged Eurocentric views on relations between the Global North and Global South.

Both schools offer important insights into the South African context. Despite the challenges that confront historically black universities and black academics in South Africa, it is clear that efforts towards curriculum transformation will require black academics to be resilient in conducting research using rigorous techniques to reveal the socio-economic circumstances of the black majority in the country and challenge racism in its diverse manifestations. As the Atlanta and Howard Schools show, it would also add value for South African academics to continue to debunk the tendency to define the stereotypes associated with black South Africans such as crime, rape culture and corruption as inherently biological traits. Black academics should be bold in conducting rigorous research that reveals realities determined by social conditions orchestrated by colonial, apartheid and modern-day white oppression rather than racial traits.

African-American Studies was critical in legitimising non-Western cultures

by debunking Eurocentricism in the US curriculum, including African studies programmes and promoting multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary studies (Zeleza 1997). The contestation and negotiation about knowledge production and exclusion in US higher education institutions spearheaded by the African-American studies movement resulted in the rise of courses in African-American Studies, Africana Studies and Black Studies such that by the 1980s, more than 600 US higher education institutions were offering courses in these disciplines (Zeleza 1997). Many of these programmes embraced Pan-Africanism and Afrocentricity in their outlook as African theorists such as Cheikh Anta Diop and Frantz Fanon were engaged (Zeleza 1997). In efforts towards curriculum transformation, African scholarship should constitute the dominant texts in South African academics' bibliography in their publications and the reading lists of students across the country's universities. Only when students are exposed to African scholarship across the continent and academics develop conscious efforts to rely less on Western scholarship and rigorously engage African scholarship will South African transformation efforts produce concrete results.

## 5. Conclusion

This article engaged the recent clarion call for curriculum transformation in South Africa by drawing lessons from decolonial schools such as the Ibadan School of History and the Dar es Salaam School of Political Economy in post-independence Africa. It also offered insights from African-American Studies with special attention to the Atlanta School of Sociology and the Howard School of International Affairs in the era of the civil rights movement in the US. Efforts towards curriculum transformation in South Africa have not yielded the desired results as the country's universities continue to perpetuate the hegemony of Western thought. It is against this backdrop that the article argued that beyond internally formulated strategies, South Africa could learn from the transformation efforts of Africa and African-American Studies in the US, such as in the areas of establishing similar schools in the country and the rise of vibrant black academics to conduct rigorous research on the social conditions that breed racism in post-apartheid South Africa. The extent to which South Africa can achieve genuine curriculum transformation will be determined by all stakeholders' seriousness and commitment, including policymakers, academics, and students.

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# ESSAYS





# Being, Belonging and Becoming in Africa: A Postcolonial Rethinking

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## Abstract

This paper focuses on the nature and significance of belonging and its intersection with Identity and being in the world. Its primary impetus is to address the question of belonging as it arises in postcolonial multi-ethnic, language, religious and racial identities in Africa. Where does ethnic and national Identity intersect and diverge? It remains a highly politicised and contested issue. Narratives on African belongings provide insights into the shape and complexity of the contemporary African debate and illustrate how, in the presentation of belonging as having multiple and competing manifestations, what it is to belong per se is rendered indistinct. This exemplifies the critical problem where Belonging is concerned. While Belonging is invoked as an issue of crucial existential concern in public discourse and across a broad range of disciplines, there is an apparent and troubling lack of conceptual or linguistic apparatus. The notion can be grasped and critically analysed. Therefore, this paper seeks to explore and redress this problematic situation. Consideration of Belonging also involves Identity and thinking of how these two concepts are articulated together in theory. This latter question is explored by surveying the theoretical and conceptual frameworks from which 'senses' of Identity and Belonging are commonly expressed in postcolonial Africa. Belonging qua correct relation represents an entirely new way of understanding, in existential terms, what it is to belong (or not), not only in the postcolonial African context but wherever and whenever the question arises.

**Keywords:** African Identity, Becoming, Belonging, Ethnic, Language, postcolonial, Racial

## 1. Overview

Belonging is necessary for being and becoming since it moulds the political framework, which reflects how our brain is constructed or wired as a result of our sociological upbringing. The entire purpose of identity development is to endow us with our Identity (what we can become as individuals and what kind of role we can have in society). Belonging and the politics of belonging have been central themes in psychology and sociology throughout their histories, and these theories encompass both classical and contemporary perspectives (Yuval-Davis 2006: 198). Identities are a component of an individual's sense of Belonging; economic, political, and sociocultural dimensions are present in philosophical perspectives, whether explicitly addressed or not. That is when we observe ethnic entrepreneurs cultivating specific forms of ethnic Belonging for the purpose of political instrumentation via an institutional system that places a premium on ethnic group rights. Elites discover a new type of entitlement by looking back in time: the ascriptive right of kinship, which is assumed to be a 'natural right' of belonging to a specific ethnic group (Kebede 2003: 14). As a matter of course, the concept of representation, ethnic groups, and power appears to be a natural right based on shared group membership. However, representation entails much more than simply belonging to a community.

Occasionally, delineating distinctions is possible when the concepts of Identity and Belonging are infused with specific elements they possess (Pfaff-Czarnecka 2013: 15). In other words, because notions of Identity and Belonging are defined by the specific elements they contain, the elements that comprise those concepts may or may not be distinct. Perception is extremely important because it matters how you construct your worldview. Their application must be heuristic, as they do not necessarily carry any inherent analytical value; instead, it is how we apply them that this value is conferred. As a result, it is impossible to make a definitional distinction between them at this level, as if doing so resolves any debate about their analytical or political utility. The very same conclusion applies, but it is also possible to discern some broad patterns in the ways they have been and continue to be used, which point to a heavy's theoretical baggage. According to Phelps and Nadim (2010: 136), belonging can refer to a variety of interconnected group borders that imagine common descent; belongingness can also refer to ethnic groups that share national, racial, religious, or other culturally

shared characteristics (e.g., language, norms, or values).

While concepts are always required, we must distinguish between heuristic and definitional concepts, which ascribe a static and predefined meaning to the terms we use. Identity has undergone reappraisal, and now it is imperative to remember that it has continuing relevance to a concept with meaning for actors. Its infiltration into a common understanding in the Western world, most notably with the rise of possessive individualism (MacPherson 1962: 240), makes its use a potent instrument for making and contesting political claims. It raises the question of how Identity has become intertwined with everyone's assumptions about the social world and thus must be engaged with rather than disregarded entirely. This demonstrates how Identity pervades everyday perceptions of the social world and thus requires engagement rather than being ruled out of court altogether. It can be compared to the similar argument, for example, made on the issue of race, as illustrated by (Solomos, Findlay, Jones, and Gilroy 2004: 11). Racial Identity is ascribed meaning and significance not because their existence is referred to as race but because it has been a necessary discursive ontology informing social relations in the modern period. This is because race has become a new tool for achieving hegemonic dominance in an era of crisis management strategies. In the context of a society that is in a state of structural crisis, the race is more likely to play a central role in maintaining existing power structures than to challenge those structures. Simply refusing to engage with or use it implies that the social ties it creates and is entwined with are rendered invisible or marginalised.

It is also important to revisit some of the more challenging aspects of Identity here because identity delivers complex ideas. Identity formation has the benefit of assisting in recognising that each individual's identity is complex and multifaceted and formed in response to his or her circumstances (Alcoff, Hames-Garcia, Mohanty, Hames-García, and Moya 2006: 112). Additionally, contrary to critics, the concept of Identity is complex and dynamic; Identity is neither monolithic nor static. These include notions of the Self, i.e., Identity as denoting both the 'core self' and the aspirational Self (e.g., see Erikson 1968), as well as notions of primary Identity, Identity as a form of categorisation we assert (e.g., in relation to authenticity but also to symbolic and material resources) or that others attribute to us.

Additionally, it encompasses the concept of Identity as a practice, as

performance (e.g., as in lived everyday performativity or as impression management). Identification can occur in numerous ways. For instance, putting up with these organisations' dictates causes a conviction in the individual that they are the most effective means for achieving his goals (Kirloskar-Steinbach 2010: 38). The concept is founded on the idea of shared spheres of being with similar others (found most prominently in the related and perhaps less problematic concept of identification), such as shared emotions (for example, toward a 'group' or homeland), shared values and beliefs (e.g., religious, political, cultural), or shared gender, ethnic origin, or class. Naturally, none of these latter formulations can be understood without taking Identity into account as a battleground for power, recognition, representation, and redistribution methods.

Several things here can raise potentially distinct analytical issues, which makes lumping them all under the identity term highly problematic. The concept of Identity is founded on three fundamental ontological premises: Belonging, being and becoming (Peers and Fler 2014: 914). Another critique is to assert that Identity presupposes a static 'being' that obscures the processes at work, i.e., the methods of becoming is part of being interconnected by kinship ties, i.e., having a sense of commonality; being shaped by the natural setup (Phelps and Nadim 2010: 14). Being a person in the modern world entails making one's own decisions – which, of course, varies depending on one's circumstances (Pfaff-Czarnecka 2013: 28). Therefore, it is linked to the kind of positivistic framing that 'being' potentially hails. Construct Identity is a continuous process of being and becoming, belonging and longing to belong; this duality is frequently reflected in identity narratives (Yuval-Davis 2006: 202). The assumption is that 'belonging' means 'being like others' and that there is an implicit sense of 'coming together.' On the other hand, the concept of 'belonging to' relates to the theory of individualisation, which conflicts with communitarianism; during the process of individualisation, individuals become increasingly unconstrained by encompassing collective orders (Pfaff-Czarnecka 2013: 28).

Assuming the Identity of I; developing competence, and taking into account the identity of a social being; the concept of becoming contains ideas of potential and growth, transformation and self-actualisation in each of these contexts (Wilcock 1999: 5). Becoming is a process that enables both change and transformation and the recognition of practice and agency, though each entails its own set of provocations. For we might ask: Who is the subject

capable of ‘becoming’ and under what circumstances? What processes at various levels contribute to this becoming? The issue is located at the intersections of several different constricting environments or spaces. For instance, the narrative constraints what and how she can do; our future vision is inextricably linked to our cultural identity. Hegemonic and particular but marginal public discourses that the subject can access or embrace also impact the limitations of society’s repertoire. The narrative provides accounts of experience and access to more extensive descriptions to the social observer. Narration is not only a flawed method for eliciting subjects’ lived experiences, i.e., it can yield the experiential level with the caveat that the account is always partial and intersubjectively constructed, but it also goes beyond this. It is never divorced from both the societal framing and the intersubjective field in which it is told, and thus it is linked to more significant power dynamics.

## **2. An Analytical Perspective on Belonging and Becoming Through the Identity Lens**

Rwanda is a noteworthy case study because the genocide was founded on issues of constructed Identity over time; it is critical to spend time with people and observe their reactions to the past. The creation of a distinct ethnic identity and the roots of the Hutu/Tutsi divide must be reconsidered in light of the political, social, and economic context. Rwandan society fractured in 1994 as a result of ethnic identity labels; division is created when compassion can be extended and limited, which gives racial ideology its destructive power (Hintjens 2001: 27). Hintjens continued by inquiring how and why the shift from a more fluid social identity to the formation of barriers that prevented any compassion for the ethnic Tutsi in Rwanda occurred. Identity politics legitimised violence against members of the victim group and their adversaries, and it provided cover for both mass and political violence. Apart from various other factors, such as colonial narratives and administrative practises, the early 1990s economic and political crisis, and the state’s use of ethnic-based national foundation myths.

According to Freedman, Weinstein, Murphy, and Longman (2008: 669), the nearly imperceptible phrase is ‘new Hutu-Tutsi-Twa identities’. In this case, this can be taken to mean that colonists established these identities as ‘new,’ in accordance with the official storey. Another noteworthy aspect of Rwandan clans is their wide

array of ethnicities. Clans were commonly used as identification elements before introducing the new Hutu-Tutsi-Twa identities imposed and circulated by the colonial and postcolonial bureaucracy. We frequently distinguish origin myths based on objective factors such as 'ethnicity, origin, skin colour, or blood relatives' from those based on subjective factors such as feelings of Belonging, linguistic abilities, or nationalistic sentiments. The fatal myth of Identity developed in colonial Rwanda dates back to that period (Hintjens 2001:42). In its efforts to reconcile its past, Rwanda considers those who exist on the periphery of ethnic or national Identity. However, there is no conclusive argument that polarisation between Hutu and Tutsi, or between Rwandans and non-Rwandans, will not occur. However, it is necessary to develop stronger consociationalism because it is a lengthy healing process. Several African countries have the opportunity to learn from Rwanda's history of encounters between people of different ethnicities and languages. Recently, a schism has developed between anglophone and francophone Cameroonians, owing to colonial linguistic separation. Similarly, ethnic differences and conflicts exist in South Sudan between ethnic Dinka and Nuer, in Kenya between Kikuyu and Luo, and a recent major confrontation between the Tigray and the central government in Ethiopia are some striking examples.

Rwandan history is acceptable as long as it is understood that everything was fine in Rwanda prior to colonisers assigning ethnic identities that were used to incite ethnic conflict (Hintjens 2008: 15). These are the colonisers in reference to the construction of 'pseudo ethnic' identities within Rwandans. These identities never existed prior to colonisation or were constructed solely for political purposes. The tactics of European colonial powers and the ethnic ideology they spread helped contribute to the tragedies of the Rwandan genocide. Regardless of their disparate backgrounds, the identities of those involved in an identity-based conflict generate interpretive tensions (Freedman, Weinstein, Murphy and Longman 2008: 669). Furthermore, it was elaborated that this official narrative complicates the task of promoting a unified national identity while overcoming persistent ethnic divisions. A unified national identity is sought to be ingrained in the collective consciousness of the populace. Given the possibility of entrenched unofficial histories and divergent interpretations of the same event, it is critical to dissect and debate to avoid a recurrence of the situation.

Efforts to understand and elucidate the depth of ethnic versus national Identity

in Africa are extremely important. As is the case for many things, it varies between individuals and communities according to their level of education, exposure to rural and urban areas, and the influence of different factors. Individuals living in rural areas and those living on the state's frontiers are far more politically aware than previously believed in most African countries; they have a stronger sense of national Identity than ethnic Identity (Miles and Rochefort 1991: 394). It is partly because fewer Africans are exposed to numerous identities that conflict with their moral and national identities. Comparing and contrasting national and ethnic identities can be difficult in any society. Some of these are linked to each other, but others are distinct; what stands out is how we phrase the question, aside from the effect of ethnocentrism, economic deprivation, and the majority or minority status on individual and group harmony.

Ethnicity is still widely used as a social identity, and ethnic subgroups exhibit distinct ethnocentrism toward their own subgroup, in contrast to a favourable view of otherness in Africa. African studies and discourses, when examining the changes within the dominant symbols, it is necessary to recognise that the meaning of African conversion has remained constant. However, only the policies governing its expression and practice of ethnocentrism and ideological racism have changed (Mudimbe 2020:32). First, I cannot entirely agree with Mudimbe's assertion that the African knowledge system is deficient in explaining cultural and ethnic bias; second, Africa is not a homogeneous society. I do agree there are some communalities but not indefinite terms. Zeleza (2006: 16) argues that a victory for Western-centric narratives beginning with Greek myths about Africa and progressing through colonial libraries and postmodernist discourses is a defeat for African-centric narratives. He believes that African intellectuals have been subjected to this ethnocentric epistemological order, a product of Western material, methodological, and moral standards, while simultaneously resisting and harnessing this influence. This paradigm represents the entire African continent and each individual country as being in various stages of 'affirmation,' 'denial,' 'inversion,' and 'reconstitution,' respectively. According to Alumona and Azom (2018: 293), for Africans, the community serves as both a physical and ideological identity; they place a high priority on community life and communalism as an essential aspect of their culture. The approach of African communalism is rational and has an immediate effect on the lives of the people.

### **3. The impact of African postcolonial ideologies on Identity and Belonging**

The primary concern is determining what pattern underpinned postcolonial governance and how that governance model was constructed. The postcolonial Africa quest is primarily concerned with accounting for the political, aesthetic, economic, historical, and social effects of European colonialism and imperial cultural legacy. Additionally, the human impacts of colonised peoples' and their lands' control, marginalisation, and exploitation. Second, the installation of the postcolonial governance model was to subvert ideological norms regarding how to hold political office and address prevalent notions of social inequality. Positive programmes lack the contrariness and imprudent anger associated with corrective or retributive agendas, but they also subordinate your Identity to your relationships with others; former colonial masters continue to exert influence over the postcolonial mind (Sen 2007). In other words, postcolonial African political ideologies inherited from the colonial past or copied from the socialist camp. The postcolonial African political environment was defined by colonialism's legacy, mingled with the emerging influence of Eastern and Western political ideologies of socialism and capitalism, respectively (Kidane 2018: 33). Postcolonial Africa underwent significant political and demographic changes due to the introduction of new doctrines, resulting in the emergence of two distinct political factions; Stalinists, using their definition of the Marxist nation and national question, characterise one of these factions as an African national-populist movement.

Most postcolonial African political leaders chose a socialist path for two fundamental reasons. As one would expect, the primary motivation for socialism's rise was that, because the Capitalist camp had colonised Africa, socialism was seen as an excellent way to combat prior inequity in wealth distribution. Additionally, the only method to seize control of production from the capitalist monopoly is through legal appropriation justified by socialist ideologies. To be sure, the term 'class' or 'caste' is not indigenous to African languages; in African society, the concept of 'class' or 'caste' does not exist (Nyerere 1987: 7). Socialist thought generates an entire lifestyle; a European socialist finds it impossible to conceive of socialism without developed capitalism. This policy had one serious flaw: it was based on ideology rather than applying socialism to African reality and was

misused by the regime to preserve power. Kebede (2003: 16) establishes unanimity around the canonised leadership as the sole interpreter of the ethnic group's interests; as with Marxist-Leninist groups, this justification for concurrence serves to justify dictatorial regimes and undemocratic methods of rule.

Numerous intelligent African leaders convened to debate why scientific socialism should not be considered a part of African societies, and countless compelling arguments were advanced. The argument was that there was no class contradiction. Most Africans are agrarians and rely on subsistence farming methods that do not foster socialist ideals in their societies. That is why Julius Nyerere popularised the concept of Ujamaa, which translates as 'family hood in Swahili, as an indigenous socialist ideology for Africa, specifically Tanzania. Compared to European socialism, African socialism was never able to capitalise on the Agricultural or Industrial Revolutions; conflict did not arise from pre-existing social class divisions (Nyerere 1987: 7). Though he did so from the start, true socialism is a state of mind rather than a plan or programme. However, the wrong interpretation of socialist ideology (pseudo socialism) has negatively impacted African countries' ethnic and religious identity relationships. Among numerous incorrect interpretations of Stalin's philosophy, nations and nationalities were divorced from socialist theory, distorting the sense of Identity and belonging in some African countries. African social security is derived from the extended family network's social bonding. In most African countries, there is no formal retirement plan or health insurance, as in developed countries, and this is one of the aspects of African socialism: family ties are a part of it, and African socialism is fundamentally based on this kind of social network.

One of the consequences of ethnic, tribal, and language dynamics is that the Marxist concept of nation and nationality has found its way into political arenas. 'A nation is a relative community of character' (Stalin 1913). The nation is described as made up of several physical and spiritual characteristics that separate the people from each other based on their nationality. Stalin defined 'nation' as 'a historically determined, long-term community comprised of people who share the same language, inhabit the same territory, engage in the same economic activities, and exhibit the same psychology manifested in a shared culture' (Karat 1975: 5). Similarly, he continued, "nationality' or a group of nationalities were used to form a nation once capitalism was developed, with the onset of the bourgeois revolution (and thus the bourgeois-democratic revolution) coming

to completion.' An abridged definition of 'nation' holds that it is a mature entity capable of forming a nation-state and possessing collective self-consciousness. On the other hand, 'nationalities' that have developed cohesiveness as a community have no material prerequisite for nationhood.

The African country's hope dimmed due to imported ideological misconception, and its nation-building process stagnated, leaving it unable to guide the society toward its goal. Part of the result of such a crippling effect was parochialism, myopia, and a lack of ownership, making it impossible to lead by analysing social growth and need rather than appeasing European ideological fantasy. European socialism arose due to the Agrarian Revolution and the subsequent Industrial Revolution; these movements established the landed and landless classes in society (Nyerere 1987: 6). I do not doubt that ideology is necessary for societal progress; however, it remains artificial unless it conforms to actual conditions. There was a dearth of exposure to various epochs of political and ideological change. As a result, colonial Africans were never exposed to an era of political transformation and ideological experimentation, leaving them with a void to fill to determine what was best for the general population. Additionally, certain African countries lacked a critical mass of population conducive to political debate and an adequate level of public discourse about governing structures. It is unthinkable to establish a socialist system without industrial development, organised labour unions, or a politically active peasantry.

The only economically sustainable system for a country with a bourgeois population is based on liberal capitalism. One might imagine that developing an ideological framework for the state of postcolonial African peoples, which has been shattered by a century of colonialism, would be difficult. The contrast here is that the protagonist, Mamdani, is portrayed as an equal or embodiment of disparate cultural identities, such as 'worker' and 'capitalist,' or 'landlord' and 'tenant' (Mamdani 2005: 15). As Mamdani has stated, one should distinguish one's political, economic, and cultural identities from those imposed by the colonial state. In Africa, the flawed nation-state project fuels inter-group struggles for limited economic and political power, frequently involving ethnic or other culturally accessible oligarchies. As was the case during colonialism, bureaucratic authoritarianism, ubiquitous patron-client relationships, and a broad ethnic dialectic of assimilation, fragmentation, and competition have persisted in postcolonial Africa (Berman 1998: 331). Numerous political philosophies reflect

these underlying proclivities toward various aspects of today's African political environment.

#### **4. Identity as a Political Instrument of Otherness**

Researchers in numerous academic disciplines have studied this problem, including the social sciences and the humanities, employ a new concept known as identity politics to refer to issues as varied as multiculturalism. Multiculturalism embraces diversity and historical postcolonialism, social ethnicity, religious fundamentalism, and global terrorism; however, multiculturalism is frequently defended because cultural freedom requires it (Sen 2007). By their very nature, identity politics ostracises otherness in the name of accommodating within an imagined society that aspires to monoculturalism across the broader social structure. On the other hand, multiculturalism has accelerated anarchy in postcolonial Africa and formerly communist Eastern Europe by promoting women's and civil rights, separatist movements, and violent ethnic and nationalist conflict. Identity was formed and expanded by incorporating more 'modern' characteristics derived from colonial and postcolonial administrative and political structures; postcolonial experiences are consistent with distinct national and ethnic consciousness levels among ethnically identical individuals (Miles and Rochefort 1991: 395).

These initial seeds of cross-disciplinary conversation were evident from the first time a scholar used the term identity politics in a context other than their own. As such, the general understanding of Belonging, referred to as identity politics, is a political strategy used by individuals to advance political agendas directed at members of particular genders, religions, races, social backgrounds, classes, or other identifying characteristics. In 1979, Anspach coined the phrase 'identity politics' to refer to disabled people's activism focused on changing their own and societal perceptions of disabled people. Bernstein (2005: 47) the term 'identity politics' was used abstractly to refer to ethnicity as a contemporary form of politics, in the sense of critical pedagogy that connects social structure and poststructuralist ideas about subjectivity. Additionally, it is well established that political assessments of identity politics intersect with sociological examinations of the relationship between Identity and politics.

As a result of this understanding of otherness and the emergence of

philosophies such as *négritude* or black personality and African philosophy have become significant African ideologies on the subject of otherness (Mudimbe 2020: 436). Otherness emerged from a discursive process in which an in-group engaged in a 'us vs them' contest. As Staszak put it, 'Us,' the Self creates one or more marginalised out-groups 'Them,' the 'Other' through stereotyping a difference as a means of avoiding potential discrimination. *The ultimatum for bringing peace and tranquillity into our lives is to reject the concept of themness and accept and practise the fact that 'them' lives within us. That is, we must recognise 'being' as humanness and cultivate a sense of 'belonging' within our respective communities, which will culminate in our 'becoming' as one global humanity.* Aspects of this 'otherness' can be seen in the emergence of various self-definitions associated with cultural or political nationalism, as well as the contribution of this reactive viewpoint to fundamentalism (Sen 2007; Staszak 2009: 6). When people have unequal power and social status, they are more likely to be othered. Staszak further underlines that 'exotism' or exoticism, which is in direct opposition to another place's 'abnormality,' refers to things that are 'normally' normal in this place. However, it is important to note that the exotic phenomenon is not an attribute of the exotic location, object, or person.

## 5. Ethnic Vs National Identity in Africa

Identity politics, ethnic group formation, and the processes by which people identify as an imagined community within a nation-state occur concurrently, with ethnic group formation being the most important. The question is to find out which came; first, some people believe that one must resolve the chicken or the egg causality conundrum, which frequently appears as 'which came first: the chicken or the egg?' Additionally, ethnic group identity must be linked to the country's national Identity, as various ethnic groups within a nation-state conceptualise ethnic group identity differently. Prior to the turn of the twenty-first century, several studies on rural African populations challenged the prevailing wisdom that ethnic solidarity trumps national consciousness (Miles and Rochefort 1991: 393). Partly because periphery populations relied on local chiefdoms for administration; additionally, postcolonial African governance was deficient in consolidating central power and promoting patriotism.

Individuals who believe they face more group discrimination are significantly

more likely than those who believe the faceless group discrimination to identify as ethnic minorities, immigrants, or settlers. This could be a conflict between a minority and the majority, or it could be a conflict between national and ethnic identities. From this vantage point, it is believed that it is up to the individual to ensure the development of national Identity while minimising ties to primordial ethnic groups affiliation (Molina, Phillips and Sidanius 2015: 225; Mežnarić 1993: 119). Various factors may influence the scenario, including economic, political, and sociocultural structure, but this is not always the case. In postcolonial Africa, the depth of the colonial effect of divide and rule and the nation's homogeneity and heterogeneity are also critical. According to Kirloskar-Steinbach (2010: 31), belonging to a cultural community and developing a sense of national Identity is traditionally viewed as a social phenomenon that enables me to comprehend 'who I am,' my place in the chain of being, and the world I inhabit. To put it simply besides, settlement patterns, identity issues, and being ethnic minorities all have a considerable influence on society and can grant or ban you from being categorised as an ethnic minority.

Identity and identity politics are inextricably complicated. However, one could argue that being a human comes first, followed by national Identity and, if necessary, ethnic personality. Sen (2007) explains that in addition to distinguishing between contrasting and noncontrasting identities, we can also differentiate between different groups that may belong to the same category, such as citizenship, or distinct categories such as citizenship, profession, class, or gender. There may be no discernible distinctions in 'belonging' when dealing with distinct categories such as citizenship and profession. Although these ambiguous identities do not challenge territorial claims to 'belonging,' they do vie for our attention and priorities. When competing demands collide, an individual's loyalty to his or her race, religion, political commitments, professional responsibilities, or citizenship may become incompatible. The distinct possibility of feeling at home and 'belonging' only grows worse over time, as you reflect on how much you used to enjoy being at home and yet realise that achieving it will be extremely difficult as you search for a new one (Pfaff-Czarnecka 2013: 17). Country House does not necessarily refer to a residential location or a constructed home; instead, it has a broader connotation that refers to a nation or a state of being in villages or neighbourhoods that provides a sense of belonging from a psychological standpoint.

## 6. Racial and language Identity in the Continental Realm

Africa is home to diverse ethnic, tribal, and racial groups, including the Bantu, Hamitic Berber, Cushitic, Mande, Guinean, Nilotic, Nubians, San (Bushmen), and African Pygmies. Moreover, there are minorities, Caucasians, Indians and Chinese, who emerged through migration trade and the effect of colonisations. These are the roots of tribal and racial lines without undermining another group and subgroup may exist. African civilisations, particularly in African history, have been known to adapt to their ethnic or religious surroundings; ethnic groups arose throughout the colonial period, and individuals have been known to adapt to their ethnic or religious circumstances (Smedley 1998: 692). Africa's ethnolinguistic classifications are as follows. Afro-Asian, Niger-Congo, Nilo-Saharan, Khoisan, Austronesian, and Indo-European. However, additional research and reconfiguration-based scientific identification mechanisms are required based on indigenous knowledge systems. Greenberg (1948: 24) categorises the continent's languages into five families: Semitic, Hamitic, Bantu, Sudanese, and Bushman. The classification process begins with examining linguistic types, with each linguistic family defined by a set of structural features. Yet, under each main category, sub ethnolinguistic classifications such as Afro-Asian consist Amhara, Hausa, Oromo, Somali, Tachelhit Berber, Tigrayan; Niger-Congo comprises Akan, Fula, Igbo, Kongo, Mande, Mooré, Yoruba, Zulu, Shona. Nilo-Saharan language families are Dinka, Kanuri, Luo, Maasai, Nuer. Similarly, other ethnolinguistic classifications contain languages under them.

Sen (2007) Said that when our shared humanity is attacked and divisions such as religion, community, culture, nationality, or civilisation are consolidated into a single ostensibly dominant system of classification, the universe of plural and diverse categories that shape the world in which we live is obliterated. When it comes to Belonging, one's social location is the most racially and culturally segregated and impenetrable; language, culture, and religion are significantly more amenable to voluntary assimilation with specific groups (Yuval-Davis 2006: 209). Africa is diverse from an ethnic, cultural, and religious standpoint. Several religious groups in Africa, including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and traditional religions. Alumona and Azom (2018: 293) Political contestations in Africa are frequently based on ethnicity and religious beliefs; people often make political decisions based on religious affiliation. With the exception of South

Africa, racial dimensions are insignificant or non-existent. The era of racial political identity dominance in South Africa ended with the end of apartheid.

Who is an African? Indigenous people born in Africa, people descended from natives of Africa or people who trace their ancestry to Africans who were already indigenous. To my mind, it is critical to distinguish citizenship from Identity; Identity is inextricably linked to being and belonging, whereas citizenship can be acquired or lost through temporary or permanent residency. The accurate depiction and manifestation of how Identity trumps citizenship following five centuries of forced migration of African descent are African Americans. That is one of my compelling reasons for believing that African Identity, ingrained as Africanness, does not easily fade. According to Zeleza (2006: 15), the conflation of Africa with 'Sub-Saharan Africa' and 'Black Africa' that pervades African discourses ultimately results in a racialised view of Africa, Africa as biology, and Africa as the 'black' continent; it is founded on the metaphysics of difference, a quest for the civilisational and cultural ontology of blackness. I take a contrary position to Zeleza on three fundamental points regarding African Identity and geographical division. Africa and Africanness share a common identity as one Africa that is not divided by Up-Saharan and Sub-Saharanism; additionally, Africa is a melting pot of diverse ethnic, linguistic, and cultural value systems. What complicates the explanation is that the term 'black' dehumanises and undermines Africans; instead, use the term 'people of colour' or 'human colour', and Africans who are not considered people of colour should be appropriately accommodated. My argument is that apart from colour resemblance, there is no such thing as a 'white' or 'black' person in the world.

The concept of Africans being referred to as foreigners in other African countries stems from insecurity and a desire to preserve the colonial legacy border project. According to Africa Speaks' April 11, 2015 communique, 'no African man can be referred to as a foreign national on African soil,' implying that 'no African is a foreigner in Africa.' Further, the communique alluded to the fact that the borders African governments claim today contribute to Berlin's Balkanisation and do not reflect who we are as Africans. By amplifying colonial architecture and labelling fellow Africans who live outside our borders as foreigners, we add insult to colonialism's wounds to our collective Identity. Being African in terms of identities, languages, and cultural diversity provides a unique economic and political reintegration opportunity. African Identity is a constructed reality

based on shared geographical, historical, sociocultural, political, and economic representation in response to dominant conceptions and reconfigurations; the governance structure will bring African nationalism to life, facilitating unification (Kidane 2018: 32). As African unification projects reimagine African Identity, the boundaries of 'Africa' and 'Africanness' shift; as a result, the subject of African identities is as vast and complex as the continent itself (Zezele 2006: 15). Everyone has a different idea of what these are, but identifying them is essential for analysis.

## **7. The Politics of Belonging in Africa and the Territorialisation of National Space**

The resulting politics of belonging and ethno-territorialization of national politics risk undoing gains made in promoting national Identity and confining people in limited scopes at lower strata in the majority of African politics. Ethno-territorialization of national politics can negatively affect people's sense of national identity and prevent them from participating in more extensive political engagements. Understanding the relationships between cognitive, territorial, and biographical dimensions is critical when studying belonging and Identity formation intertwined with social relations. People's perceptions of territorialisation have shifted away from social groups and toward state structures; for example, the South Sudanese government has focused on establishing borders and extending central government authority throughout the country (Sjögren 2015: 168). While I support the state's efforts to unite South Sudan's national Identity, I believe that an alien ethnic federal structure will eventually allow local identities to flourish and threaten the central government. 'Territorialization' and 'Nativisation' or disassimilation has a dual effect: on the one hand, it promotes economic development; on the other hand, unless culturally enriched, it creates a 'us versus them' mentality. Due to the conflicts inherent in society, these social contexts and immediate life-worlds carry antagonistic forces that affect the identities and trajectories of young people who are 'immigrants' and who form 'strangers' generations after generation (Ålund 1995: 286).

There are only limited instances where political systems can restore equilibrium, and they can only do so if accompanied by legal structures, if not completely lacking. In reality, the complexity of the identity politics community

frequently views social systems as non-equilibrating systems. On the other hand, political institutions can create and sustain identity politics by motivating people to belong to or not belong to a specific constituency. Bouzas (2017: 219) Belonging entails tracing a relationship in which a degree of ambiguity and distance is implied when defining the membership boundary. Additionally, it was demonstrated that identity definitions leave less room for doubt about the group's boundary. Some can be more permanent over time, not to mention that specific identity characteristics, such as language and sex, are challenging to change. Similarly, as a form of Identity, Belonging is relational and does not necessitate the same boundary-drawing as the latter.

Politics as a 'The politics of belonging,' as defined by John Crowley, is 'grubby boundary maintenance work' His emphasis was on the divisions that exist between 'us' and 'them' in the global population (Yuval-Davis 2006: 204). According to Benedict Anderson, nations are 'imagined communities.' They are imagined communities, according to Anderson, because while the majority of members of even the smallest nation will never meet, know, or even hear of their fellow members, the image of their communion lives on in each member's mind.

It demonstrates the vital link between the development of modernity, which is frequently viewed as a construction, and the retention of tradition, which may manifest as an outmoded image of a mythical past (Mudimbe 2020: 9). The downside of modernity is that it brings many difficulties with it, some of which have remained unchanged for centuries and others that are brand new. In Africa and throughout the world, modernity creates new problems that it cannot adequately address, from the hardships of poverty and inequality to the collateral damage caused by entitlement and corruption that impede development. According to some scholars, Yuval-Davis (2006: 198), such as Anthony Giddens and Manuel Castells, modernity has transformed people's sense of Belonging, with effective belonging shifting away from a nation- and state-level civil societies and toward reconstructed defensive identity communities. According to Giddens, the time has become more uniform and interconnected due to modernisation and globalisation (Giddens and Pierson 1998: 63). Prioritising changes over time makes it possible for people to easily connect with one another and the surrounding world. Both Castells and Giddens concur that self-identity is not a unique characteristic of a person; it is the Self as understood reflexively by the individual in connection to her or his biography (Castells 2011: 10).

## 8. Identity and Belonging as a Weapon for Ethnic Chauvinism

Identification and recognition are the processes that result in the sense of Belonging, which is a relaxed attitude toward oneself and one's surroundings that is achieved through the use of relational and negotiated processes of identification and recognition. Ethnicity has evolved into a critical but contentious analytical concept in the broader social sciences and an increasingly important aspect of social identities in contemporary multicultural settings (Phelps and Nadim 2010: 13). Many scholars agree that ethnicity refers to the classification of people and group relationships in which myths or ideas about a shared origin or history are used to draw boundaries between different groups. People across the globe are experiencing 'ethnic' conflict, and 'ethnicity' appears to be a relatively new concept referring to human identities marked by elements of exclusivity, opposition, competition, and antagonism (Smedley 1998: 691). Ethnic chauvinism, prejudice, and political opportunism can be defined as the general attitude of someone who places a higher value on their own people or nation than others. Another unfortunate consequence is that it enables narrow-minded ethnic chauvinists, rabid nationalists, and political opportunists to infect the rest of the population with their pernicious agenda. When you move beyond an identity-centred language, you can identify alternative modes of self-understanding, alternative identification idioms, and alternative social locations (Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 32; Lichterman 1999: 111). We must move beyond 'identity' to better understand society.

Appropriateness and ethnic Identity are two aspects of appropriateness. All focus group discussions included themes of Belonging, origins, and ethnic identities; feelings of belonging were frequently ambiguous and contradictory, as many participants appeared to struggle to position themselves in relation to a concept of national Identity (Phelps and Nadim 2010: 15). Belonging can contribute to theoretical debates about the framework of international reality by challenging political realism's disregard for individual subjecthood and constructivist perspectives' tendency to view Identity as embodying a high degree of cohesion (Bouzas 2017: 117).

The theoretical and contextual debate should address whether 'belonging' or 'identity' comes first; this will aid in understanding how an individual or 'being' is depicted, as well as the fundamentals of identity and belongingness constructs

from context and conduct perspectives. The four items were as follows: 'I identify strongly with other members of my ethnic group'; 'I have a strong bond to my ethnic group'; 'I frequently consider myself to be a member of my ethnic group'; and 'I have a strong sense of belonging to my ethnic group,' which means that four items were used to assess an individual's level of ethnic/racial identification (Molina, Phillips, and Sidanius 2015: 213). Nevertheless, other concepts may elaborate on belonging from a sociocultural and political perspective.

## **9. Problematics of Belonging and The Rise of 'Elitism'**

In Africa, an elitist minority controls a disproportionate share of the country's wealth, political power, and ability due to an excess of wealth, political power, or ability. Such a state of affairs becomes the new normal, and most of the population remains undeveloped economically, politically, and socioculturally. While substantial work remains to be done, there is a vital need to ensure that everyone has a better life and bring about greater security and serenity and a change from an elitist to an egalitarian society. The culprit, according to Kebede, is the rise of African elitism, a phenomenon that combines colonialism's unique effect with indigenous African contributions; elitism as a characteristic effect of colonial rule is not difficult to establish (Kebede 2003: 2). His additional statement was that modern, secular societies would replace the indigenous societies of Africa with various social classes of indigenous elites, including business elites, which will help carry on the necessary universal values of global modernity.

The promise of an education revolution in Africa has been contaminated by both colonialists and native elites, who have influenced the system. Incapable of bringing technological and industrial advancements and competitiveness for young Africans on the domestic market are all part of the job description of so-called educated citizens. While it significantly influenced the development of an elitist modern education system that controls production by substituting local citizens for colonial masters, it also contributed substantially to the development of this system (Seife 2020: 24). These issues are inextricably linked to each superpower's strategic, historical, and comparative advantages in the region. Apart from the elitist hurdles, I also conceive of Africa and African identities as states of being and as dynamic identities in progress (Zezeza 2006: 18). There are complex, ever-changing historical processes at work and tangled colonial

borders that lack structure and agency, making it difficult to detect or forecast the improvement of Africa's sociocultural system.

Accepting the elitist attitude is the same as adopting a colonialist mindset; in other words, the elite's moral bankruptcy directly results in the belief that Africa is primordial. Instead, we make no assumptions or assertions about the legitimacy of an elitist commitment to the status quo. By definition, counterrevolutions are elitist, but they are not always the result of elite leadership and may never be the exclusive domain of the elite (Slater and Smith 2016: 1476). Because any revolutionary notion of political change necessitates the overthrow of elites, revolutions are ideologically egalitarian, whereas ultraconservatives are ideologically elitist. It is critical to thoroughly examine political economics and sociocultural space to comprehend the underlying causes of the rise of 'elitism' in Africa. Postcolonial leadership has been unable to fulfil various responsibilities, demanding a paradigm shift in rewriting historical myths. There is, however, a chance to resolve this issue through broader Pan Africanism to assure the restoration of African Identity through decolonisation of colonial discourse.

## 10. Conclusion

When Identity is dissected into various categories, and its multiple layers of deference are assessed, anyone can see the mystification. When we observe the convergence of human aspiration as a collective, which limits the scope of Identity, we also observe the presence of a larger concept of being in humanity. In other words, all humans on mother earth share a common desire to live in good health, have access to food, shelter, and clothing, be educated, be wealthy, and have a happy family. Furthermore, all humans have biological similarities in that they all consume the same type of oxygen and exchange carbon monoxide with plants. All humans consume food for survival and defecate similarly, although food consumption and varieties may vary. Changing human behaviour in a short period is a difficult task, even more so on a continent like Africa with limited media, education, and basic infrastructure. However, human consciousness has evolved to embrace otherness without preconditions.

A higher moral or religious principle can only assist us in instilling righteousness if we put it into practice. To consider gradual action in conjunction with the Pan Africanist vision is imperative because it is necessary to accept

and reclaim the right to act incrementally. Otherwise, 'Territorialization' and 'Nativisation' or disassimilation both have a detrimental influence on economic development and aggravate interethnic disputes of 'us versus them.' Several essential issues must be addressed when it comes to reunifying African states. Ethnic chauvinism, or supremacy, may operate as a time bomb for the demise of civilisations. Political enmity will naturally transform over time when full enlightenment arises. Natives and newcomers will coexist peacefully as economic and social development progresses. 'identity' as a human being and 'belonging' and 'becoming' as a political force for African populations seeking to advance social welfare.

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# Dynamics of Political Entrepreneurship among the Elites in Post-Colonial Zimbabwe

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## Abstract

The political arena is now abounding with people who either live 'off' or 'for' politics. The ferocious competition for people's votes is akin to economic competition, and as this study submits, the politicians are just like business people. Both productive and predatory profit opportunities have pervaded the Zimbabwean political arena, where politics is a type of business. Political positions have afforded some people access to economic resources, making politics the quickest way to untold and unending riches. As a result, the political landscape has invited abuse of power, thereby decimating not the physical being but the entire moral fibre of the nation. This study shows how Zimbabwean political leaders have become the primary controllers and distributors of power and resources with the capacity to penetrate society politically and secure their hegemony. Reference is made to politicians belonging to the ruling party Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), where politicians from either party have exhibited, though not uniformly, patterns of misconduct characteristic of political entrepreneurship. This paper applies the entrepreneur's theory to political behaviour to identify political entrepreneurs and analytically distinguish them from other government agents.

## 1. Introduction

Like people of other pursuits, politicians are also drawn to politics by their success's prestige to them. As Harold (1948: 20) put it, their desire for 'power for power's sake thrives on a very complicated set of motives which usually involves the feeling of prestige which the exercise of power bestows.' Zimbabwe has seen different kinds of political institutions and, hence, different politicians. The majority are party politicians whose working career is spent inside a specific kind of political organisation. Some political professionals will have worked in the administrative areas of Government and will have become 'political' to the extent that they navigate their way into the policy-making levels. Interestingly, not all people who are in politics are professional politicians, either in the party sense or in the bureaucratic sense. There are also political outsiders who, according to Mills (1978: 228), 'are people who have spent the major part of their working life outside strictly political organisations but are brought into them or force their way into the political order.' However, the political outsiders are occupationally formed by non-political experience. These capitalise upon their intimate access to an official who wields power to weave their way into an inner circle. Studying political entrepreneurs' behaviour implies scrutinising their strategies to secure power and retain it. Zimbabwe attained independence following a bitter war of liberation against the colonial Government. As a function of history, the liberation war credentials or lack of them have determined access to power and resources hence the creation of 'insiders' and 'outsiders' (Jo-Ansie van Wyk 2007: 6). The war of liberation's gun-fashioned relations created a socio-political environment that manufactured its own elite, while the post-war period created positions for those lucky enough to benefit. This study demonstrates how war credentials within ZANU-PF became instrumental in catapulting people to positions of authority and the penultimate access to resources. Even though political parties (ruling or opposition) might be factionalised and consumed by internal succession disputes at whatever political level, the tendency among politicians would be to create a political space in which themselves and party loyalists are rewarded politically and economically. A closer look at the nexus between business and politics makes it abundantly clear that 'politicians and businesspeople constantly draw resources from their economic activities to finance political activities and maintain social prestige and vice versa' (Daloz 2002: 62). Zimbabwe has manufactured its own

political entrepreneurs who have become more mercenaries fighting for power and money than servants of the people who voted them into their esteemed political positions.

## 2. Unpacking Political Entrepreneurship

McCaffrey and Salemo (2011: 555) refer to political entrepreneurship as ‘an outgrowth of the theory of the market entrepreneur which derives from extending entrepreneurial theory from the market into the political sphere of action.’ The term political entrepreneur also embraces business people seeking to gain profit through subsidies, protectionism, government contracts, or other favourable arrangements with Government through political influence. In business, entrepreneurship involves taking a risk to create new business ventures and gaining an advantage over a competitor to maximise profits. In politics, a political player would seek to gain certain political and social benefits to provide the common goods shared by an unorganised general public (Taewook 2004). Since the political entrepreneur is always on the hunt for resources, obtaining a position of power or authority would catalyse access to wealth to remunerate followers to preserve and perpetuate one’s power. Such people would invest their own financial means (drawn from a business activity or corruption) and control a certain number of votes to win an election.

Thus, political entrepreneurs perform the same or similar functions in the political sphere as entrepreneurs perform in the free market economy. Consequently, the political entrepreneur can yield profits and losses, too, based upon one’s ability to anticipate future market conditions or political landscape correctly. Politicians are subject to electoral success or failure, and success can be forfeited if the politician does not allocate resources to suit the supporters’ needs. In order to maintain a certain level of fame or prestige, politicians, like market entrepreneurs, are engaged in the constant arrangement of the production process through the direction of resources. The end product for a political entrepreneur could be the satisfaction of consumer wants (the imitation of market entrepreneurship) or the wants of interest groups or political associates. The judgment in allocating resources employed by political entrepreneurs potentially yields a previously identified revenue stream that may also be subject to uncertainty.

While there are professional politicians and professional musicians or actors in politics, one does not need to be an expert in a particular domain. To a large measure, they are general practitioners like the general physician. Political entrepreneurship, therefore, defines itself most precisely by considering the various stages of one's career before election into a political position and after the end of the last mandate. Questions arise as to whether a parliamentarian, as an example, intends to return to one's original profession, fight for a new political position, or be re-elected upon defeat. The absence of 'political cushions' for defeated politicians breeds political entrepreneurs where one has to live 'off' politics or 'for' politics (Dogan 2002; Compagnon 2012; van Wyk 2007).

Corruption and its other active arm nepotism are considered in this study as ingredients that lubricate competencies that nourish political entrepreneurship. Let me hasten to point out that the Western criticism directed at African examples of corruption and bribery can sometimes be hypocritical. As Bretton (1973: 122) has argued, some westerners whose countries have grown rich and powerful partly by corrupt means 'prefer to point out the mote in Africa's eye instead of extracting the beam from their own' (Bretton (1973: 122)). However, as in many other debates, the outcome hinges on definitions. Kurotwi (2014: 105) defines corruption as 'the misuse of entrusted power for private gain whether this power is inherited or through education, marriage, election or appointment'. With corruption being a shifting amoeba, it may turn out that what a European or an American may describe as thrift, foresight, enterprise, shrewd business acumen, or even ruthless ambition is corruption or bribery. In Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular, corruption has been defended by referring to a theory of beneficial corruption, which provides that what really matters is the social end objective that a corrupt official has in mind. The theory offers a yardstick to measure the social value of corruption. However, this study explores whether destructive or beneficial, the incidence of corrupt practices and the birth of political entrepreneurship are at the very root of power and influence.

### **3. Contours of Debate**

According to Compagnon (2012: 47), politics is a domain in which 'actors strive for power...in order to enjoy the riches and prestige-feeling that power gives'. Politics, therefore, becomes more of a business organisation whose source of

capital is getting votes and winning elections. It is competition over resources and the electoral market that breed political party confrontations or factionalism. Compagnon (2012) has argued that drawing a line between virtuous politicians and crooks is largely pointless given that the pragmatic rules of the competition are the same for all players in a given society. Schumpeter (1972: 347) highlighted how 'political leaders use propaganda and other tricks similar to commercial advertisements.' As the politicians try to mobilise resources, they resort to corruption and embezzlement to succeed. In light of the above, Medard (1992: 172) observed that 'while it is necessary to have political power in order to be rich, it is also necessary to be rich in order to retain political power.'

Holcombe (2002: 152) argues that for political entrepreneurs to be successful in politics, 'they need political support hence the need to convert economic resources into political authority for purposes of gaining support from the constituents.' Thus the ability of the political entrepreneur to command a following largely depends on one's informal abilities to assist people privately through availing access to new resources. In pursuit of victory, competing entrepreneurs would engage in cheating, lying, nepotism and corruption, which can deliver success. When politics is an extension of business and interests of political entrepreneurs who dominate state structures, then predation and plunder become strategies towards maintaining their grasp on socio-economic and political power. Mats Utas (2012) discusses how political entrepreneurs, among them warlords, regularly enter into conflicts and peace processes due to personal socio-economic opportunities and prospects for personal advantage.

As this study shows, Zimbabwe's liberation struggle history and a chequered post-colonial socio-political disorder have seen the growth of variegated political entrepreneurs. Weiss (1994) articulates how following independence in 1980, the political elite used its power to build up patron-client networks to foster private business. Weiss's work touches on some aspects of how top jobs went to the colonial era's political elite, which had been instrumental in achieving independence. Wild (1997) also considered how veteran nationalists who, after independence, occupied leading political and military positions, used their considerable power to enrich themselves in the ostentatious quest for status which they fancied. Chung (2006: 259) does not hide that 'one of the changes taking place in ZANU-PF was that it was rapidly transforming itself from a liberation movement into a business conglomerate where economic

opportunities were available to those who identified with the ruling party and denied to those who opposed the ruling party? She has no illusions about the regime's corrupt nature, having stated that 'patronage from the political elite was now the key to success' (Chung 2006: 269). Alexander and McGregor (2014: 758) argue that control over land and mineral resources has been the source of immense political capital for ZANU (PF), as partisan access has been used to win votes in the countryside and towns and to undercut the MDC-T, which has had little or nothing in terms of material reward to offer its supporters. Accustomed to arbitrary authority and moneymaking opportunities, ruling political parties often systematically appropriate the state's financial power, employ relatives and cronies, and bend public policy toward partisan ends. While Zimbabwe's war of liberation manufactured its own political entrepreneurs, of interest is unveiling how war credentials became instrumental in catapulting people to positions of authority in society. As Bratton (2014: 28) has put it, 'the top leaders have used the sacrifices of the guerrilla fighters – 'we died for this country – as the ultimate justification for their own political and economic entitlement' (Bratton 2014: 28). Liberation struggle credentials (or lack of them) determined access to power and resources and divided the political elites into 'insiders' and 'outsiders' (Jo-Ansie van Wyk 2007: 6). Kriger (2003: 6) also established that veterans of the liberation struggle who fought under the banner of state transformation often 'used war credentials for legitimacy and drew on the history as well as symbols of the struggle to construct their power base with privileged access to state resources'. According to Kurotwi (2017: 12), politics in Zimbabwe 'has been industrialised and the only qualification which matters is being politically connected to political entrepreneurs. These 'industrialists' fund politicians by meeting the high cost of election campaigns. This ultimately leads to these financiers seeking personal favour once the candidate they backed gets into power. Thus, the control over resources catalyses patronage networks and satisfies the ambitions of the political entrepreneur.

In Sierra Leone, the Foster Commission report revealed that millions of pounds were diverted from public use to directly serve the immediate tactical or strategic goals of political parties, factions, cliques or individuals. In Nkrumah's Ghana, substantial funds were extracted from private entrepreneurs, especially Europeans, Syrians and Lebanese, through kickbacks from contracts, donations, or outright deposits in foreign bank accounts of the group in power. 'An inquiry

into the assets of ministers, political party functionaries and other persons associated with the former regime of Nkrumah revealed that the practice of charging commissions on contracts became a vast loophole through which numerous persons were able to enrich themselves' (Bretton 1976: 127).

#### **4. War of Liberation, Politics and Business**

During Zimbabwe's war of liberation, businesspeople had divided their time between family businesses and the demands of the struggle. Oblivious to the risks and costs involved, business people used the family businesses to provide transport, food, clothing, money and other resources required by freedom fighters to support the war effort. Before his departure to join the liberation struggle in Mozambique, Crispin Mandizvidza provided his Bhasera Chivaraidze Restaurant as a venue for high profile political meetings. George Simbi, Elias Madondo, Auxilia Mandizvidza and Piniel Mkushi provided food and clothing to the guerrillas from their family stores within Gutu District (Tarugarira 2016: 191). Established business people like Madondo and Mkushi weathered the storm into independence because some of their businesses at Gutu-Mpandawana growth point never ceased to operate even at the height of the war while the small rural business people closed shop. During the war, the business community found itself trapped between the violence and demands of both the Rhodesian security forces and guerrillas. Such a fragile environment created fertile ground for the emergence of criminal networks, which later facilitated the rise of political entrepreneurs. Thus politics, theft and war converged frequently in the manufacturing of political entrepreneurs. Therefore, some businessmen came from the war bruised while others gained business stamina to face new challenges. Some businesses collapsed because people lacked creativity and innovativeness to diversify lines of businesses, while others scored tremendous success through political patronage and clientelism.

The end of the war and the coming of independence and majority democratic rule ushered in a period of euphoria and great optimism. ZANU (PF) claimed to be a Marxist-Leninist party, promised the people socialism, and assumed leadership of this struggle. Given the official blessing that socialism got from the Government, many non-socialists became socialists. However, within the party, real democracy was fragile from the beginning, and signs were there that

'government socialists' had no heart for socialism at all. The then Minister of Home Affairs Enos Nkala retorted, 'Not all people in ZANU-PF are socialists' (Prize Africa, 1985). Saunders (2000: 21) also observed that the culture of 'chefs' and military structures, necessary for undertaking an armed struggle was very powerful, adding that 'ZANU-PF was ill-prepared to implement the scientifically conceived development strategy which required strict discipline among planners, implementers and government institutions' (Saunders 2000: 21). Instead, the party's bad habits, including corruption, abuse of power, anti-worker attitudes, and lack of internal democracy, gave socialism a bad name.

After independence, the demobilisation of ex-combatants witnessed money being paid to 'undeserving relatives and friends of senior commanders who amassed financial wealth at unprecedented levels, many becoming millionaires' (Sadomba 2011: 69). Barely two years after independence, the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) commander General Mujuru was said to have amassed such wealth that he 'literally bought Shamva and Bindura towns' (Sadomba 2011: 69). According to Kriger (2003: 70), demobilisation was 'corruptly and unfairly handled as groups of relatives and concubines of senior commanders, and politicians benefitted at the expense of deserving ex-combatants.' Politicians' embezzlement, outright and open diversion of funds for illicit purposes fostered the development of a dimension of political entrepreneurship. If one had connections with those in the echelons of the ruling class, survival was guaranteed. Later on, this translated into that to get a job, piece of land, money, and a contract, one needed to be connected to some political 'godfather'.

The controversial Leadership Code that ZANU-PF adopted in 1984 urged leaders to disclose their financial affairs or other assets to a properly constituted party or government body investigating corruption. Sections of the code dealing with the acquisition of property provided that a 'leader would not own or have a beneficial interest in more than 50 acres of land, not become company directors or use relatives as fronts for business ventures' (Parade Staff Writer 1989: 19). At the time, ZANU-PF's President Robert Mugabe had sounded a warning that acquisitive leaders would face a choice, either to quit their posts or to relinquish their property. By 1986, corruption had already raised its ugly head, with politicians accusing each other of malpractices. The then Minister of Transport, Hebert Ushewokunze, lost his seat on the politburo, and Byron Hove lost his parliamentary seat after being asked to resign by the ZANU-PF Central

Committee for personal attacks on politicians over accusations of corruption and nepotism. Edgar Tekere, then Secretary-General of ZANU-PF, questioned how some politicians had acquired lots of property and yet they had just ‘come out of the bush’. He lamented the failure of the leadership who authored the Leadership Code to observe its statutes or code of conduct (Prize Africa 1986: 15). The Prevention of Corruption Act 34 of 1985 was enacted to curb corruption. The Government was very aware of the long-term costs of corruption, so it created this Act of Parliament in 1985. With its many additions and amendments which followed, it laid down penalties to be imposed on a guilty party.

However, the leadership’s scramble for wealth was confirmed by the Willowgate scandal of 1988, which involved the purchase and resale at inflated prices of cars produced at the Willowvale plant. The Commission of Enquiry under Justice Sandura, which President Mugabe had appointed, found substantial evidence of corruption among many senior officials. In all, five cabinet Ministers lost their jobs after being forced to admit wrongdoing. One ZANU-PF stalwart Maurice Nyagumbo later committed suicide. While Minister of Higher Education Dzingai Mutumbuka was convicted in court of profiting from a car deal, senior party official Frederick Shava was granted a presidential pardon for a far more serious perjury conviction. Following this, Attorney-General Patrick Chinamasa suddenly dropped related charges pending against several other ruling party officials (Saunders 2000). The prerogative to institute or not institute inquiries and legal proceedings against shrewd political manipulators became obscured. By the 1989 ZANU-PF-ZAPU Unity Congress, visible evidence of the code had all but disappeared, and it died a natural death.

## **5. The Nexus between Politics and Business**

After the expiry of the Lancaster House Constitution, provincial land identification committees, with representatives from Agritex, ZANU-PF and the Commercial Farmers’ Union (CFU), were established to identify land for acquisition. In 1995, the ZANU-PF dominated National Land Task Force was established, marking an important movement in the locus of decision-making beyond the reach of ministerial structures. Arguably a privileged group of veterans, politicians and business people immensely benefitted from the Fast Track Land Development Programme. The militarised redistributive nationalist projects characterised by

the Fast Track Land Reform Programme (FTLRP) and the Indigenization and Empowerment policies were designed to benefit the politicians first. Official records indicated that ‘the ruling elite are now proud owners of multiple farms expropriated from the former white commercial farmers between 2000 and 2008’ (Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition 2012). In the Gutu district of Masvingo province, the then Vice President Simon Muzenda and the former Minister of Finance, ZANU-PF legislators for Gutu Central, Gutu West and Gutu South went on a rampage for farms. According to Bratton (2014: 12), ‘the ‘chefs’ succumbed to predatory temptations, in the process transforming themselves into wealthy political barons’ (Bratton 2014: 12).

Almost all members of Parliament and Senators have graced the Gutu district constituencies; for example, Ransome Makamure, Empire Makamure, Ephraim Marwizi, Shuvai Mahofa, Josiah Tungamirai, Vitalis Zvinavashe and Simon Muzenda were into business. Within such an environment where political, economic and social fields were not very differentiated, elite circulation from politics to business and vice versa was eminent. The argument is that ‘elites used a first position to obtain another one or strengthen the original one’ (Daloz 2002: 62). Since independence, the broadening of the political arena of the Gutu electorate led to the steady, considerable turnover of leadership and the entry into the political process of those who were hitherto excluded. These were largely people of high standing drawn from high civil servants like school heads and business people. This process culminated in high profile figures in rural society, particularly the teachers- cum-businessmen and farmers to positions in the local ZANU-PF hierarchy as councillors. Political entrepreneurship is featured in the osmosis between high administration and high politics.

The introduction of village and ward committees in February 1984 further strengthened these local ZANU-PF functionaries. Decentralising power within the growing state apparatus through the Village Development Committees (VIDCOs) and Ward Development Committees (WADCOs) provided a means for rebuilding and reinvigorating clientelistic networks that tied politically strategic social groups to the regime. In some cases, power was transferred to a virtually hand-picked and barely literate group of people who were trusted to further the long-term interests of the local politicians. Thus, party politics became the typical channel for new entries into elite positions and the penultimate political predation associated with the ruling elite. Besides running some businesses, the

school teachers who were regarded as the intellectuals of the peasantry found political activity as one of the few roads of promotion. Political pickings gave them a potent incentive to protect ZANU-PF from defeat in elections. However, former teachers dismissed by the electorate found it unpalatable to return to their original jobs. Notwithstanding the financial assistance offered by the political parties during election campaigns, as candidates, they were also obliged to raise campaign funds. Economic capacity was transformed into political power by financing campaigns and determining public opinion by buying votes and officials.

The former Vice President Simon Muzenda, who was also the Member of Parliament (MP) for Gutu North from 1996 till his death in 2003, was one of the district's successful politicians and entrepreneurs. Muzenda owned Paradise Park Motel and a wholesale complex formerly owned by Merkiek at Gutu-Mpandawana growth point. Murefu Investments at Zvavahera Township dealt with hardware and agricultural supplies, Chekesai transport and a filling station, among other business interests under the holding company-Murefu Investments. He inherited the Chekesai Pig and Diary Company from his mother, who ran an irrigation scheme and multiple agro-ventures. According to Jemias Sibenge, councillor of Ward 4 and Chairman of the Gutu-Mpandawana District Council, Muzenda was the hardest working MP to have graced the constituency after forming the Gutu Development Committee and assisting villagers to engage in income-generating projects knitting, poultry, pigs and cattle. However, contrary to Sibenge's remarks, Muzenda is said to have visited the constituency 'not to serve the people primarily but to monitor his businesses because his company's headquarters was in the constituency, at Zvavahera Town/ship' (Zava 1996: 13). At the Companies' Registry in Harare, Muzenda (who was identified as Simon Murefu, a manager) had not submitted the legal documents required by the Companies Registry. Missing in his company files were CR14 forms which should have been submitted a month after the company's registration. 'The annual tax returns forms which are required initially 18 months after registration and every 15 months after that were not submitted' (Zava 1996: 13).

Since Muzenda's companies were first registered in September 1991, several tax returns should have been submitted. Muzenda would not face the wrath of the law because of the political muscle he wielded. In pursuit of the indigenisation and black economic empowerment policies, predatory behaviour

and unorthodox means of wresting wealth from the white community at Gutu-Mpandawana were used by marauding politicians. Thus further enrichment of businesspeople sometimes took illegal paths.

Gutu's veteran businessmen Elias Madondo and Piniel Mkushi have used their influence in the Gutu Rural District Council's Projects Planning Office and business protectionism to approve crucial decisions on the business development Gutu-Mpandawana. In his capacity as the Councillor of Ward 33, Madondo thwarted efforts by OK Zimbabwe to open a shop at Gutu (Tarugarira 2016). It is also alleged that Piniel Mkushi took advantage of his Gutu Rural District Council Chairmanship position to acquire business stands. The probability was high that Madondo and Mkushi's ability to influence committees' decisions might have enabled them to manipulate certain by-laws to realise personal gains. Although their roles during the liberation struggle should not be underestimated, the above cases stand out as clear testimonies where the political and financial muscles were flexed to protect personal business interests. Business was politics, and politics was business.

When high profile corruption thrives on economic pursuits unrestrained by moral or ethical commitment, politics turns out to be business. For politicians, the most lucrative opportunities for quick and substantial gain arise mainly during election campaigns, from foreign investment, awarding of contracts, diversion of donor funding and non-payment for locally provided goods and services. The former Lonrho boss Tiny Rowland 'gave ZANU-PF a whopping \$14 million (one million pounds) from his private fortune to go towards 2000 Presidential election campaigns' (Horizon Reporter, August 1996: 27). Rowland would also write off huge bills for chefs who travelled abroad and stayed in Lonrho's metropole hotels. Even in the United States of America, big industrialists also fund politicians to meet the high costs of election campaigns (Mills 1978). In the end, the lobbyists or financiers of political campaigns seek personal favour once the candidate they backed gets into power. In order to get elected, the politician bribes the electorate. Large sums are diverted to private companies set up either by or for politicians, members of their families, companies willing to include them or members of their families on their boards of directors. Only an exceedingly narrow concept of human motivation and behaviour could support the belief that 'men of enterprise and proven business success can completely disassociate themselves from politics and political control' (Bretton 1973: 179).

In some instances, politicians would divert donor funds for personal use. The Gutu South MP, Shuvai Mahofa, successfully negotiated for aid money for Cheziya Co-operative from the American Friends Service Committee. With the help of the Ford Foundation, the organisation donated money and sewing machines. When an audit was carried out, 'it was discovered that Cheziya Co-operative the major beneficiary was, in fact, Mahofa's private business' (Parade 1989). In 1998, Mahofa's political career hit a snag after she was fingered in the diversion of maize grain from the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) to her supporters in the constituency, segregating perceived opponents. In 2004 the controversial politician was implicated in a bicycle grab scam where she grabbed bicycles meant for the outreach programme to fight HIV and AIDS by the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and shared them among her supporters' (Chingawo 2015). ZANU-PF Chivi South MP Paradza Mandebvu appeared in court on three counts of theft by conversion involving \$29 000, which the German Embassy had donated to assist in constructing a craft village at Ngundu Halt (Staff Correspondent, *Horizon*, 1996: 8). The former Higher Education and Tertiary Minister Professor Jonathan Moyo allegedly pilfered Zimbabwe Manpower Development Fund (ZIMDEF) proceeds and bought bicycles distributed in his Tsholotsho constituency largely to fulfil a selfish political agenda (Mambo 2016).

In the illegal VIP Housing Scheme scandal of 1997, cabinet ministers and other ZANU-PF bigwigs benefitted from money that should have been made available to provide housing for the lower-paid members of the public and the homeless. Millions of dollars were siphoned from the Housing and Guarantee Fund upon approval of loans by the Minister of Housing and Local Government to construct luxury houses for political connections (*Horizon*, 1997: 14-15). The Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Company (ZISCO) scandal, which had all the ingredients of the 1987 Willowgate scandal, witnessed the steel company's systematic plunder by politicians fighting to outdo each other in looting. A parliamentary portfolio committee tasked with ZISCO investigations found that cabinet ministers were responsible for the company's collapse (MOTO Dec 2006/ Jan 2007: 4-5). Cabinet ministers were also the force behind the informal sector operations in Zimbabwe. For instance, illegal gold panners in the Midlands Province were protected by Emmerson Mnangagwa and Constantine Chiwenga, who could lobby the cabinet to legalise gold panning (Moyo 2014: 77). Thus the

main beneficiaries of the informal trading sector are the political barons who use their influence to manipulate policy measures to their advantage.

The Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) and several municipal councils have fallen victim to senior politicians with a tendency of not even honouring their electricity and water bills, running into millions of dollars in multiple properties they owned. In 1998, the Roger Boka owned United Merchant Bank (UMB) collapsed like a deck of cards, never to recover. Boka lamented how he had assisted many politicians in starting businesses by giving them loans that they never repaid. Some names of senior government officials were even found to have been clandestinely struck off from the list of debtors (Zimbabwe Independent, 9 April 1999). Failing to honour debts seems to be a common practice among political entrepreneurs.

When the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) introduced the Basic Commodities Supply-Side Intervention Facility (BACOSS) to thwart continued hiking costs for goods and services by formal businesses, some legislators and unscrupulous business people abused the facility. Instead of sourcing supplies from neighbouring countries, they used their political links to acquire stock (especially salt) from local Grain Marketing Board depots at subsidised prices, then sold the same stock at the parallel market at exorbitant prices in hard currency (Tarugarira 2016). Political muscles were flexed to access the resources. In 2003, the RBZ introduced the Productive Sector Finance Facility (PSF) to boost companies' production in all but the informal sector. The PSF was widened to cover agriculture, financing inputs, and fuel and farm mechanisation through the Agriculture Sector Productivity Enhancement Facility (ASPEF) programme. Between 2000 and March 2008, tractors and other farming equipment (planters, disc harrows, scotch carts, cultivators, ploughs, chains, knapsack sprayers, etc.) were distributed to farmers through various government schemes. One had to be politically connected to ZANU-PF to secure any of these items. The ZANU-PF political commissar for Gutu East, the ZANU PF Councillor for Gutu Central Ward 15; the ZANU PF Member of Parliament for Gutu Central and Chief Gadzingo were among those who received tractors. In a way, the ruling elite created a buffer layer, using land reforms and related schemes to bestow privileges on new elites who were politicians-cum-businessmen. Of interest is that all these socio-economic and political machinations easily accommodated opportunists into the restructured party leadership and provided access to

state-mediated accumulation. Motivated by altruistic or selfish concerns to try to ‘improve’ the condition of the poor, they largely defended the new status quo of asset redistribution that directly benefitted them. A national pattern characteristic of ‘crisis accumulation’ found expression in the highly informal and unregulated system of wealth accumulation that dominated Zimbabwe. This mode of wealth accrual relied on the peculiarities of selective and discretionary enforcement of laws by the state. The ZANU-PF led governments during and after Mugabe’s rule continued to provide predatory commercial opportunities for military officials. The militarisation of state enterprises and parastatals, as Moyo (2014: 74) established, was a ploy ‘to increase their wealth and as a reward for their loyalty in ensuring regime survival in the face of mounting challenge from the opposition political society’.

An analysis of the behaviour of politicians belonging to democratic political institutions shows that while there are entrepreneurial opportunities that can lead toward an equitable allocation of resources, the institutions of democracy tend to pull political entrepreneurs toward predatory opportunities rather than productive ones. The potential profits are greater through predation, and the gains are more appropriable. As Zimbabwe’s Minister of Local Government between 2000 and 2015, Ignatius Chombo ‘amassed vast tracts of prime land across the country by grabbing the 20% commonage land which the Local Government Act mandates developers to reserve for the construction of government premises like police stations, schools and offices’ (Mambo 2017: 8). Zimbabwe’s former Minister of Mines, Obert Mpofu, is believed to have acquired enormous wealth through ‘vulture capitalism’ which involves zero payment towards the appropriation of profitable business and or assets that are later ‘legitimised’ through normal business activity. The minister acquired the then Zimbabwe Allied Banking Group (ZABG), which became the Allied Bank before it collapsed (Daily News 2018).

The biggest financier of ZANU-PF congresses, the minister was also fingered by ‘Core Mining and Minerals for demanding a \$10 million bribe from the company so that he could process a license for the company to mine in the Chiadzwa diamond fields’ (Kurotwi 2017: 23).

## 6. Opposition Politics and Dimensions of Entrepreneurship

Karenga (1993: 312) defines politics as ‘the art and process of gaining, maintaining and using power’. The duty of managing a thriving democracy is that the ruling party and the opposition parties jointly share. It is the duty of the opposition to keep Government on its toes by probing and questioning its conduct of public affairs. Government accounts and methods of implementing policy must be examined and criticised where necessary. The opposition in a democracy must be loyal to the constitution and the people. However, loyalty does not mean you cannot advocate for change in the constitution. Loyalty means a commitment to change through democratic means. The opposition has to go out and put some resources in investigating the operations of the machinery of the state and the Government’s administration of this machinery and then educating the people on how the Government can be run more honestly, efficiently and economically. The opposition has to be taken seriously as a government party-in-waiting.

In the early years of Zimbabwe’s independence, the ZANU-PF leadership worked determinedly towards realising a one-party state. The preparations of a one-party state involved the marginalisation- if not eradication- of opposition parties, which were seen as the chief obstacle to realising this goal. However, at the end of the 1980s, the international, regional and domestic political environment unexpectedly shifted, diminishing the prospects for a one-party state. The formation of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 1999 posed a serious threat to ZANU-PF rule because it emerged from the widespread disaffection, protests, apathy and disillusionment from within trade union, intellectual, church and student circles (Saunders 2000; Alexander and McGregor 2014). It is beyond doubt that the MDC’s broad representation of civic, labour, business leaders and former commercial farmers also created fertile ground for the growth and development of political entrepreneurs in shades of professionals, opportunists or outsiders.

Legislators’ primary goal is to gain and maintain power. This explains why incumbents cooperate against challengers to gain majority support in the legislature to pass legislation they favour. While an election that pits an incumbent of one party against a challenger of another at first appears to be primarily a competition among individuals of different parties (Holcombe 2002: 555) argues that upon closer examination, ‘the party affiliation is secondary, and

the competition is primarily between an incumbent who wants to retain political power and a challenger who wants to take it away.' As such, party competition is analogous to economic competition in the marketplace. Competition for the right to monopoly power leads incumbents to erect barriers to entry for challengers. This explains why Zimbabwe's closed and controlled politics could not easily shift to accommodate a credible multi-party system. With the ruling party (ZANU-PF)'s domination of national politics, multi-party democracy remained idealistic. The uneven political playing field further undermined the credibility and effectiveness of parliament as a democratic, representative institution of Government.

The political and economic crisis of 2008 and the ultimate entry of the MDC into a power-sharing pact signalled the loosening of ZANU-PF's grip. However, the new political settlement creating the Government of National Unity (GNU) was based on compromise had both advantages and disadvantages. To all appearances, ZANU-PF's strategy was to frustrate the MDC leadership to the point that they would withdraw from the unity pledge, thus ensuring the failure of the GNU without ZANU-PF incurring blame. According to the World Bank (2010), ZANU-PF political appointees remained on the public payroll, and reformers found it difficult to restore a performance ethic to public administration. ZANU-PF retained exclusive control over the coercive instruments of the state, and its ministers were in charge of the security, intelligence, and judicial services. The expansion of official posts to accommodate political allies suggested that both sides (ZANU-PF and MDC) were willing to sacrifice the careful management of scarce public resources to distribute political spoils. MDC cadres who garnered positions in Government saw this as 'an opportunity to gain access to assets previously enjoyed by ZANU-PF, as reflected in the Members of Parliament's demands of state-of-the-art vehicles among other official benefits' (Bratton 2014: 132). A consideration of Zimbabwe's GNU has shown that even though the ruling elites might hail from different political parties and persuasions, they will meet to discuss the art and method of ruling. By so doing, they will tend to separate from the general populace and enjoy the lion's share of the national cake. Promoting coalition governments allows losers, whether from ruling or competing parties, to get into Government through the backdoor. Parties involved have the incentive to pursue those opportunities for their own political benefit.

The initial executive leadership of the MDC largely hailed from the labour movement. The number of lawyers among Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) executive members and legislators continued to increase, most probably because they possess many of the qualities required from politicians like the habit of speaking in public, oratory talent, knowledge of legal questions, among other qualities. It is not surprising that many politicians are recruited among professionals who know how to craft words. The talent to craft words is a meritocratic achievement. Admittedly, knowledge of legal techniques is a great advantage for those engaged in politics, where each action is translated into a legislative text. Lawyers comport themselves the same way in political life. The larger number of lawyers among legislators is also explained by the possibility for the legal profession to be temporarily abandoned and taken up again in case of electoral defeat. Political success also ‘improves the lawyers’ reputation at the bar’ (Dogan 2003: 281). A heated debate ensued over the position taken by MDC lawyers to defend ZANU-PF members in court.

Soon after coming to power, President Mnangagwa expanded an anti-corruption crackdown on the country’s political elite, who faced allegations of money laundering, bribery, extortion and abuse of public office for personal gain. All those caught in the net were politicians with links to the vanquished Generation 40 (G40) faction of ZANU-PF, which was bracing for the accession of Grace Mugabe to power. The move by the estranged politicians to retain lawyers aligned to the opposition MDC as their lead counsel to argue their corruption cases in court attracted controversy. Walter Mzembe retained the MDC vice national chairperson Job Sikhala, the former Minister of Tourism, vice president Welshman Ncube represented former vice president Phelekezela Mphoko and Tendai Biti represented former Reserve Bank governor Gideon Gono (Staff Reporter Daily News, 27 August 2019). The MDC leadership was slammed for representing ZANU-PF members accused of being corrupt. Political entrepreneurs would normally have misplaced priorities because they hunt for money or related benefits. Those sympathetic to the legal fraternity argued that a lawyer’s representation of a client does not constitute an endorsement of the clients’ political, economic or moral views and activities. As lawyers, they argued that they must serve anyone in need of legal assistance, and only a sense of justice and professional responsibility was what they considered in deciding whether to take on a case or not.

In the same vein, people would still question the sincerity to defend people who collaborated with a rogue regime that arrested, tortured and detained them and their kith and kin on spurious charges. While the issue of professional responsibility sounds logical, underneath it lies an ugly veneer of a quest for power and greed for legal fees. The MDC has been fighting against corruption, looting of state resources, violation of human rights by the same ZANU-PF politicians who were now represented in courts of law by these MDC officials. Expressing concern over the development, a ZANU-PF minister questioned: 'Are they [MDC] really fighting corruption or they just fight for money?' (Staff Reporter Daily News, 27 August 2019). In such a case, the probability is very high that political entrepreneurship becomes a push factor for getting closer to ZANU-PF officials for purposes of striking deals and contracts and dining together at the corruption table. The MDC has always accused ZANU-PF of perpetrating political and state-sponsored violence against their supporters, vote-rigging and other heinous acts of grand corruption in Zimbabwe. It defies logic that the same people they are fighting in the political arena turn out to be direct clients in courts. It sounded queer and rather awkward that even MDC supporters questioned the sincerity of their leaders in the fight against corruption. The MDC leadership cared for and fed the goose that lays the golden egg for them.

The former President of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, alleged that all opposition parties whose agenda was his removal from office connived with western governments and NGOs for personal financial gains. He cited what he labelled the 'Madhuku Way' whereby the bankrupt leader of the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA), Lovemore Madhuku, would stage dramaturgical demonstrations to attract the attention and sympathy of donor agencies to get funding which he channelled towards personal ends (Mugabe 2012). What Mugabe insinuated was that politicking was Madhuku's primary source of income.

On 17 May 2019, President Emmerson Mnangagwa launched the Political Actors Dialogue (POLAD), a voluntary platform for presidential contestants in Zimbabwe's 2018 harmonised elections. According to President Mnangagwa, the platform was designed to proffer solutions to Zimbabwe's challenges through peaceful, open, and transparent discourse. While 18 political parties participated at the launch and subsequent meetings, the MDC Alliance, a major contender in the 2018 elections and a befitting protagonist in the dialogue, shunned

participation from the onset. It is logical to argue that POLAD as a platform lacks dignified men and women with a sense of responsibility and commitment for fostering unity among citizens. Some of the members deceptively embraced national dialogue to stay in power, while others joined to earn lucrative positions for personal aggrandisement. One of the hangers-on, outspoken members of POLAD and a member of the irrelevant grouping and lifetime National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) leader Lovemore Madhuku claimed that POLAD was a 'national' project. The members requested all-terrain vehicles and sitting allowances, and other perks from President Emmerson Mnangagwa. One can convincingly argue that POLAD members are political rejects in the dialogue for confidential material and financial benefit rather than correcting the Government's political rhetoric. Some members have withdrawn their participation, while Bryan Mteki has since rejoined ZANU-PF. According to the Zimbabwe Independent (10/01/2020), members of POLAD are truly shameful, greedy and pathetic political opportunists.

## **7. Conclusion**

The study has shown that in some instances prior to independence but routinely after that, politicians have overtly and covertly taken advantage of the multitude of legal and illegal, legitimate and illegitimate socio-economic and political opportunities to enrich themselves. Strong connections developed between political and commercial elites have enabled big business easy access to the inner ear of Government and the other way around. The fading and highly porous boundaries that defined politicians and business conglomerates have widely enabled political leaders to gather resources and pre-eminence. The instinct to acquire wealth reigns supreme among Zimbabwe's political entrepreneurs not so much as a result of the history of poverty, landlessness and hunger, which for decades plagued those who are in leadership today, but sheer greed and selfishness. The mere fact that there is such heated competition for elected office and that people are willing to spend so much money to try to influence the outcomes of elections suggests that there are substantial profits to be gained by the victors. Access to the political sphere seems necessary because it is the quickest way of acquiring wealth. The roles of political parties as privileged greenhouses of elites, agencies of elite recruitment and channels of promotion through

patronage networks make it abundantly clear that most Zimbabwean politicians are political entrepreneurs who live 'off' politics. Like those in the market, political entrepreneurs discover and act on unexploited profit opportunities. In Zimbabwe, politics is a type of business, and business is politics.

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# Identity, Repression, and the Collapse of Apartheid

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## Abstract

Scholars emphasise that an influx of resources during the 1980s lowered the costs of collective action and nourished a mass nonviolent anti-apartheid movement that eventually brought down the incumbent regime. Utilising a discourse theoretic approach, this study demonstrates that the 1976 Soweto massacre and its antecedent organisational campaign waged by the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) were pivotal yet overlooked historical factors that contributed to the apartheid collapse. While the Soweto massacre led to the detainment of BCM leadership and the death of leader Steve Biko, the event of white police killing unarmed black students in June of 1976 backfired and revealed central antagonisms and contradictions underpinning the apartheid project. Only once political identities were dislocated did the possibility arise for a unified mass opposition movement to form. Alongside weighing economic costs under threat of state repression, this study demonstrates that historical waves of revolutionary mobilisation are also influenced by identity and meanings attributed to repressive events by publics.

**Keywords:** Soweto Uprising; Black Consciousness Movement; Steve Biko; Repression; Mobilisation; Identity

## 1. Introduction

From 1948 to 1994, one of modern history's most repressive regimes carried out a state project of systemic segregation called apartheid. The ruling National Party (NP) committed over 37,000 human rights abuses to upkeep a mass project of economic exploitation and support nationalistic myths and an idea of a *Volks* race (Norval 1996). The native population and people of colour in South Africa were formally and informally subjugated and made into inferior citizens. They were institutionally and morally excluded from political terrains, while a ruling minority group controlled around one-third of the world's gold deposits. Meanwhile, challenges to the status quo were brutally suppressed – the regime successfully killed and attempted to kill anti-apartheid activists inside and outside of South Africa (Clark and Worger 2013: 97). To date, there has been a large multi-disciplinary literature explaining the dynamics behind the downfall of the apartheid regime, and many would agree that no single factor can be responsible for the demise of the NP. Popular historical and social scientific arguments emphasise that by the late 1970s and into the 1980s, the apartheid state consistently conceded its power to prevent a revolutionary overthrow (Goldstone and Tilly 2001).

A popular perspective tells us that large-scale nonviolent direct action stripped legitimacy away from the project of apartheid (Zunes 1999). Economic boycotts, mass nonviolent, cooperative efforts, and the international anti-apartheid movement of the 1980s are believed to be causally associated with the apartheid collapse. These viewpoints are underpinned by rational choice oriented logic in which utility maximisation is assumed to drive protest behaviour. For instance, Olivier (1991) argued that labour market increases and resource surpluses enabled protest to explode in South Africa by the early 1980s. Similarly, Marx (1992) contends that material pressures stemming from the opposition's ability to establish links with workers had the most significant influence on the downfall of apartheid. Explanations of this sort are numerous throughout historical and social scientific inquiry on apartheid. A cardinal argumentative point produced thus far tells us that it was less costly to protest for South Africans in the 1980s than in previous decades. However, throughout these historical accounts, anamnesis is devoid of why and how the powerful apartheid state first started to get overthrown from within. Specifically, why did the 1980s end up

experiencing a major anti-apartheid struggle? How was the NP forced to start restructuring the project of apartheid? What made the formation of a mass civil resistance-based movement possible?

This study draws a theoretical discourse argument to investigate these questions. The tradition we draw from is the Essex School of Ideology and Discourse Analysis (Laclau and Mouffe 2001; Glynos and Howarth 2007), which is a framework concerned with studying hegemony and identity. Although not heavily utilised by social scientists, our approach complements those that draw attention to symbolic meaning in the study of collective action (Lukes 1975; Polletta and Jasper 2001; Zepeda-Millan and Wallace 2013; Ebila and Tripp 2017). I argue that before mass cross-societal mobilisation emerged in the 1980s, a key set of processes took place in which the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) strategically brought together a dispirited population not as apartheid-constructed ethnic races but as one universal black identity that was constructed to have been blocked by white racism. When this force came up against the apartheid state, severe repression resulted in a dislocatory event that shifted the hegemonic formation underpinning apartheid. The government-led massacre at Soweto backfired and revealed internal antagonisms and contradictions of the incumbent regime. After these processes, mass collective action in the 1980s was driven by a new hegemonic political struggle under a dislocated polity full of destabilised political identities. Differently put, this study discovers that a large-scale nonviolent campaign in the 1980s did not arise simply due to new access of resources for the opposition, but rather, they were made possible due to the hegemonic dislocation of the 1976 Soweto massacre and the organisational campaign that was initiated by the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) proceeding up to that event.

The order of this paper is as follows: I first overview historical explanations of apartheid and its collapse. This is followed by investigating different oppositional challenges waged against the regime. Here I assess seven different challenges and state responses to those challenges. This is followed by a section that emphasises the challenge that turned out to be among the most significant – the 1976 Soweto protests. Attention is given to the BCM campaign that organised this protest and subjective meanings surrounding political agency in the context of the repression and mobilisation nexus, also known as repression backfire. The paper then highlights the profound impact of this massacre, the antecedent BCM

impact, and trajectories of liberation and revolution that ensued in the following decade. The paper concludes by presenting several implications for scholarship on the apartheid collapse and the study of repression and mobilisation.

## 2. Historical Explanations of the Apartheid Collapse

The dominant explanatory framework that has been voiced to account for the collapse of the Apartheid regime can be observed in scholarship that originates from rational choice oriented and positivist based reasoning. Here, scholars have attributed the formation and eventual success of the 1980s anti-apartheid movement to resource availability. As significant support for the anti-apartheid movement arose and greater international scrutiny was being cast on the regime in the early 1980s, the costliness of engaging in protest decreased. Hence, it is believed that mass dissent eventually contributed to the collapse of the regime of the apartheid state. What this entails is that international and external support enabled an influx of resources to enter into the anti-apartheid struggle in the 1980s, and in turn, this led to greater opportunities for civilians to wage collective action. Early in the 1980s, Adelman (1982) contended that the ‘means for blacks to redress their real grievances in peaceful ways are severely limited by political, economic, and security factors’. He also predicted that more riots and disruptions, including urban bombings, industrial sabotage, etc., would occur (Adelman 1982: 50). Schwartzman and Taylor (1999) investigate data through a time-series path model and find that ‘constraints on the domestic labor market and international financial boycotts were the primary factors in the collapse of apartheid’.

Similarly, in his *Rethinking the Rise and Fall of Apartheid*, Guelke (2005) contends that the impact of the worldwide anti-apartheid movement was among the crucial factors that brought down the regime (along with shifts in global events and balances of power). Louw (2004) reasons that the 1980s anti-apartheid movement was a key factor that led to the apartheid collapse along with the NP abandoning its working-class constituency in 1978 (Louw 2004: 69). Similarly, Zunes (1999) argues that ‘only when the youthful rebels were able to effectively build an alliance with the black working class was real change possible’. In the same vein, Zunes notes, ‘In short, the rioting Soweto youths only began to seriously challenge the white authorities when they stopped rioting, built alliances with workers in the townships, and organised a nonviolent movement’.

(Zunes 1999: 166). The shift to a largely nonviolent method of dissent helped to 'lure' white popular opinion away from continued white domination (Zunes 1999: 163). Approaches of this kind entail that individuals are rational actors that engage in cost-benefit analysis when choosing to dissent or not according to opportunity structures (McAdam et al. 1996).

External support was substantial for the anti-apartheid movement in the 1980s. Nigeria, Algeria, Egypt, Gabon, Cote d'Ivoire, and Senegal gave at least 1 million US dollars each to the ANC during the 1980s. Likewise, in the early 1980s, the ANC got funds from the USSR, which the Organization for African Unity facilitated. Then later in the 1980s, 'more resources came from Western Europe and North America' – even the UN provided funding which is why by 1986, the ANC claimed that more than half of its funds came from non-Soviet sources (Grisham 2014: 177). Interestingly enough, at this time, socialist and other left-wing forces were declining.

Moreover, the most widely referenced inquiry on the collapse of apartheid studies tends to embody a linear process of historical events. Events are treated as causal chains that empirically precede one another and connect to the outcome of interest. For example, Beinart and Dubow (1995) contend that extreme poverty in rural areas during apartheid increased birth rates, putting too much pressure on rural governance capacity, increasing prospects for large-scale political instability, and eventually leading to the system's collapse. Lowenberg and Kaempfer (1998) argue that international sanctions that were placed on South Africa in the late 1970s and early 1980s made it more costly for the regime to upkeep its status quo and that the nature of the economic system was contradictory (and hence the apartheid system was inevitably bound to collapse). In contrast, Welsh (2009) argues that splits in the NP elite base already occurred in the 1960s and that conflicts between different white interest groups played a significant role in the demise of the nationalist project underpinning apartheid. By the late 1980s, bargaining for regime transition became rational for both the opposition and the incumbent regime. Andresen (2021) describes how in 1979, there were 101 strikes, yet by the late 1980s, this number increased tenfold. Clark and Worger (2013) also emphasise that,

During the 1980s, as South Africa disintegrated into a form of civil war as black opponents of apartheid fought, increasingly successfully, to make

apartheid unworkable and South Africa ungovernable, most of the rest of the world joined in the near universal condemnation of the South African government and supported international steps to bring apartheid to an end, especially by enforcing boycotts (economic, political, sporting, and so forth) (Clark and Worger 2013: 5).

Similarly, Culverson (1996) argues that,

the anti-apartheid movement emerged as a legitimate contender in the larger policy arena during the 1977-1984 period. Several factors account for this: more consistent international attention to the conflicts in Southern Africa; the development of movement allies in Congress and in the foreign policy bureaucracy; the gradual expansion of anti-apartheid activism at the state and local level (Culverson 1996: 132).

While the methodological premises behind such approaches to the historical and political inquiry are not problematic per se, we must consider that there is more than meets the eye in terms of the historical circumstances that led to the demise of the apartheid state. For instance, Culverson's analyses miss out on the fact that already in 1976, there was an immense amount of political support being cast for the victims of Soweto from not only whites in asymmetric areas abroad and whites in the neighbouring area of Johannesburg. Increases in resources and their role in mobilisation certainly played a role in the protests of the 1980s, I do not dispute this historical reality, yet the studies mentioned above fail to consider the complex array of political identities that were prevalent throughout the noted periods. As in many other rationalised historical explanations of social change and collective action, scholars tend to essentialise protesters' identities through their assumption that the identities of individuals and groups are pre-determined in the form of activists, dissidents, youths, rioters, or protesters.

This study aims to offer a much-needed contrasting account by assessing previously neglected factors in literature on apartheid, including the hegemonic formations and identities that were a part of the apartheid regime and its political challengers.

### 3. Challenges to Apartheid

Social movement leaders and formal political parties engage in discursive articulation, and some even construct discourses of their own to challenge state hegemony. During the span of apartheid, there were a variety of different attempts at challenging state hegemony from forces such as the South African Communist Party (SACP), the African National Congress, the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), among others. Trade unions were also active during the apartheid era – the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) played a pivotal organisational role in the 1980s. Political violence and conflict were widespread over the years of 1948-1994, and even in the ending era of apartheid, there was still significant conflict in South African society, including the 1992 massacre in Boipatong (45 fatalities) or the 1994 Shell House massacre (est. 20+ fatalities). Of multiple noteworthy challenges to apartheid status quos, only several had impactful outcomes. From our assessment of more than half a dozen political challenges and accompanying massacres, only one had a dislocatory effect on apartheid hegemony. This effect was not random.

Table 1. displays significant political massacres that arose due to collective challenges to either local, regional, or state level status quos. The motive for choosing the specific incidents listed is due to the observed commonalities in discrete acts of state repression that resulted in civilian casualties during dissent. There were a heterogeneous collection of challenges to governmental status quos throughout the Apartheid regime's existence, and importantly, as argued by Zuern (2011), the dominant scholarly post-apartheid narrative has tended to aggregate all of these challenges and credit them to organising carried out by the African National Congress (ANC) (Zuern 2011: 22). If we assess the outcome of increased domestic mobilisation and the post-massacre impacts that different challenges and movements had on the political status quo of apartheid, these cases reveal a lot about both the occurrence and non-occurrence of social change during apartheid.

Table 1. Severely Violent Protest-State Interactions

<b>Massacres</b>			
<b>State Repression</b>	<b>Protest Tactic</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Increased Mob</b>
<b>1960 Sharpeville (69 casualties)</b>	Nonviolent March	March 21, 1960. 200+ dissidents - Organised by PAC to protest antimovement laws. Police opened fire	<b>Yes</b>
<b>1976 Soweto (80 casualties)</b>	Nonviolent March	June 16, 1976. 10,000+ dissidents. BCM and SASO protest against state changing of schooling language.	<b>Yes</b>
<b>1984 Vaal Uprising (100+ casualties)</b>	Violent Direct seize	Sept. 3, 1984. 5000+ Vaal townships south of Johannesburg. Thousands of burnt down homes.	<b>Yes</b>

<b>1985 Mamelodi Killings (13 casualties)</b>	Nonviolent gathering	Nov. 21, 1985. 50,000+ 13 killed in a protest against high rents.	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Massacres</b>			
<b>State Repression</b>	<b>Protest Tactic</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Increased Mob</b>
<b>1986 Winterveld Killings (11 casualties)</b>	Violent seize	March 26, 1986. 2,000+ Protest police brutality. Police opened fire on crowd. 50 burnt buses in township by unknowns	<b>Yes</b>
<b>1990 Odi magistrate's court Killings (11 casualties)</b>	Violent march/petition	March 7, 1990. Thousands of protesters from Garankuwa, Mabopane, Soshanguve met by police. Over 450 were injured.	<b>Yes</b>
<b>1992 Ciskei massacre (28 casualties)</b>	Nonviolent demonstration	Sept. 7. 20,000 protested in a prodemocracy demonstration. 300 were wounded in addition to those killed.	<b>Yes</b>

Beginning with the first of these challenges, in 1960, a wave of collective

mobilisation emerged as a response to the NP's anti-movement (anti-pass) laws. The PAC organised a nationwide protest throughout all major townships. The densest concentration of dissent was in the Transvaal province (North East). Thousands of civilians waged collective action against pass laws (restrictions on free movement) and marched to the Sharpeville police station. When hundreds of police began to respond to the crowd, live ammunition was used against protesters and led to dozens of deaths. The Sharpeville massacre ended up provoking a powerful set of repressive consequences as afterwards, the primary organisers of the protest were formally banned, and Nelson Mandela was imprisoned. Internationally, Sharpeville spurred the formation of the British Anti-Apartheid Movement. International attention was cast onto the apartheid regime, and Britain shortly after that condemned the NP only to see South Africa leave the Commonwealth one year later. Along with newly independent African states, the UN condemned this brutal act of repression. Additionally, many radical leftist groups worldwide (especially Black radical groups in the US) began to speak out and act against the apartheid regime.

Domestically, Sharpeville radicalised many opposition members, especially those in the ANC. As Fatton (1986) argues, after Sharpeville, African leaders were 'forced to become revolutionaries' (Fatton 1986: 23). Interestingly, Fatton also notes that the choice of nonviolent strategy of resistance in the Sharpeville protest was not for ethical reasons but was because the PAC was 'not yet ready to kill: Sharpeville fostered a new era of political struggle and the creation of the Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), which was a militant movement and functioned as an armed wing of the ANC. Although the PAC aligned itself with the ANC while both were exiled, their alliance did not mean much on the ground; they were still rivals until the final collapse of apartheid. Notably, substantial ANC funding came from the external source of the Soviet Union via the NP-banned SACP, and major periods of apartheid history coincided with what Shubin (2008) describes as a 'hot-cold war' that was taking place across different regions of the African continent. The early 1970s featured a revolution in Portugal and a simultaneous intensification of an independence conflict in Angola. Concurrently, guerrilla warfare based struggles were launched by revolutionaries against the oppressive Rhodesian state.

Meanwhile, the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) provided a new avenue for selfrealisation for the native population of South Africa through

rejecting NP discourse. Black consciousness was articulated based on being an attitude of mind, a way of life.' Student intellectuals led the BCM, but it attracted a much wider following. Steve Biko, the leader of the BCM, helped configure the South African Students' Organisation (SASO) in 1969, which turned out to be a major establishment and hub of BCM ideology, helping to attract other students and their families throughout South Africa. Women were vital for the strategy of the BCM (Pohlandt-McCormick 2000; Magaziner 2010). The BCM struggle against apartheid was significant because it created an 'alternative hegemony' that could only be satisfied via the complete liberation of the black masses (Fattou 1986). It also drew from Fanon and his views on political morality and sought to abandon self-serving definitions of good and evil that were assumed to be defined by self-interest (Gerhart 1978: 275). A primary political idea put forward by the BCM had to do with creating broad solidarity among blacks through emotional support (Nolutshungu 1982: 188).

Biko sought to lessen differences in characteristics between the coloured and native populations of South Africa. Its goal was to deviate away from the fundamental antagonism between the racist white regime and the suppressed native black subject. This was done not to mobilise resources as the resource-mobilisation framework assume strategically, but rather, the BCM was a philosophical force that had a major aim of personal revitalisation for highly oppressed people. In a social order where exogenous forces (minority ruling groups) had subjugated the native population for hundreds of years, Biko believed that a strong build-up of black consciousness was the only way forward so that blacks could learn to assert themselves and 'stake their rightful claim' (Biko 2005: 21). The BCM sought blacks to be self-reliant, and it assumed that emancipation for black people across South Africa depended on the role that blacks themselves were 'prepared to play' (Gerhart 1978: 262).

Importantly, this did not mean the BCM was opposed to the goal of emancipation for other coloured groups as long as groups were conscious of disengaging with what Biko referred to as a myth of liberal integration. Sakhela Buhlungu points out that the BCM defined 'black' to include all oppressed racial groups, Indians, Africans and Colored alike (Buhlungu 2006: 106). This also pertains to the SASO's strategic usage of the term 'non-white' regarding its coloured members who may not have wanted to be referred to as black (Gerhart 1978: 277). While the BCM's purpose was to unify South Africa's oppressed,

including African, coloured and Indian groups (Desai 2015), the strategies it were specifically geared towards stepping outside the realm of apartheid discourse in order to negate one of the fundamental antagonisms of apartheid between the racist white regime and the suppressed black subject. Biko argued that

The myth of integration as propounded under the banner of liberal ideology must be cracked and killed because it makes people believe that something is being done when in actual fact, the artificial integrated circles are a soporific on the blacks and provide a vague satisfaction for the guilty-stricken whites (Biko 2005: 22).

This is also likely why the BCM did not take a class-driven approach to organisation or social change and regarded workers, not as vanguards but ordinary oppressed people – like themselves (Nolutshungu 1982: 187). Theoretically, Biko was ahead of his time in acknowledging that economic relations were neither determinates of identity nor social change. As Laclau theorised, ‘antagonism does not occur within the relations of production, but between the latter and the social agent’s identity outside them’ (Laclau 1990: 15). By formulating a platform that separated and made distinct the Anglo-Boer culture from that of native African culture, Biko directly dealt with a structure of power that was ‘bestowing an inferior status to all cultural aspects of the indigenous people’ (Biko 1978: 41). Unlike other political movements (and parties) that were operative during his era, Biko and the BCM believed that reformation of the current system was out of the question as this implied accepting and engaging in apartheid discourse. Nelson Mandela once wrote about Biko, ‘history had called upon Steve Biko at a time when the political pulse of our people had been rendered faint by the banning, imprisonment, exile, murder and banishment’ (Charteris-Black 2006: 99).

The BCM put forward a universalising characteristic in its discourse. David Howarth (1997) elucidates the theoretical underpinning of BCM in the following way,

the affirmation of a Black identity transcended the imposed apartheid system of ethnic and racial difference, and its adumbration displayed a subtle imbrication of the universal and the particular. In so doing, Black Consciousness activists and intellectuals expanded the field of universals so as

to include the categories of 'blackness' and 'a true humanity' denied by white racism (Howarth 1997: 72).

Prior to the emergence of the BCM, Blackness was stigmatised. Biko's actions turned into a category of pride and asserted a new identity of 'strength, beauty, and defiance' (Morgan 2020: 14). Further, the BCM deemphasised the state constructed narrative of separation and ethnic divisions and placed it onto spirituality. Only this way could Blacks achieve group pride and individual freedom by exploring what Biko referred to as natural surroundings. These ideas contributed to spiritual realisation and the establishment of seminary networks in the early 1970s. Johann de Wet notes that Steve Biko was an existentialist communicator,

Biko may be regarded as a foremost existentialist communicator during apartheid South Africa, and that his thoughts on meaningful and authentic existence remain relevant for confronting the vexing challenges facing contemporary South African communities (De Wet 2013: 297).

The BCM theological networks differed from the state-sponsored versions of Christianity advocated by the NP. The SASO had at least three theological seminaries in different regions of South Africa. Former students would engage with communities and develop new spiritual and political action forms that had yet to be imagined (Denis 2010). The NP perceived this as a major cultural threat. In 1974, nine leaders from the BCM were put on trial and accused of terrorism by the regime. The courtroom became a place of performative subversion (Morgan 2018). As Magaziner explains, this was the longest state trial of its kind (17 months), and the fascinating aspect of this trial was that it was based around the historical figure of Jesus Christ (Magaziner 2010). State prosecutors were frustrated after long weeks of hearing the defendants' theological propositions that compared Christ's actions (against the Roman Empire) to their own, as rebels fighting against a dominant regime of unjustness (the NP's white racism in their case). Biko effectively redirected the charge of terrorism away from the accused and towards the government (Morgan 2018: 468).

#### 4. A Historical Dislocation, the 1976 Soweto Massacre

An oppressive cultural policy was enacted in 1974 when the NP changed the medium language of school instruction from English to the Dutch dialect of Afrikaans. Education under apartheid was centrally controlled and designed around planned segregation to maintain the 'pureness' of the Afrikaner race (Christie and Collins 1982). As a response to this state mandate, plans for collective mobilisation emerged in the township of Soweto. Primarily organised by the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM), a network of groups such as the Black Parents Association, the Black Women's Federation (BWF), and the Federation of South African Women took on roles in organising against this state-dictated policy change (Venter 2005). The BCM facilitated the establishment of large-scale underground networks that contained links to labour and unions (Clark and Worger 2013: 78). Movements such as the South African Students' Movement (SASM), the National Youth Organization (NAYO), and the SASO also called for the creation of political support organisations (Diseko 1992). The NAYO was founded in 1973 to project the BCM leader's (Steve Biko) views and movement ideology into communities across South Africa (Maluleke 2008). The organisation was taking place when unemployment was rising due to the 1973 oil crisis and doubled in the year before the Soweto uprising (Marx 1992: 61).

These different forces inter-meshed and came together in June of 1976 just outside Johannesburg in Soweto's township. It is important to acknowledge that the role of the BCM in organising the Soweto protests is not straightforward as some scholars claim. Although many scholars such as Kuumba (2001) describe the events of 1976 Soweto as being inspired by the BCM (Kuumba 2001: 127), or that the SASM had a 'leading role in the demonstrations by Soweto high school students' (Nelson 1981: 258), there are also those who historically dispute these claims. Some historians believe that the BCM role in organising Soweto is disputable. Frueh (2003) contends that post-massacre mobilisation that arose across the country was not coordinated or organised even though the government narrative stressed that it was and that the ANC and PAC both tried to take credit for organising these processes (Frueh 2003: 78). Marx (1992) similarly contends that although the BCM suffered from a limited capacity for mass mobilisation, this enabled the ANC to claim credit for Soweto's aftermath (Marx 1992: 66-7). While Frueh (2003) and Marx (1992) are correct in the assertion that any

single force did not organise the country-wide post-massacre mobilisation, this occurred (as subsequent sections of this study will reveal) due to spontaneous processes triggered by repression backfire and the phenomenon of political *ju-jitsu*. Importantly, evidence points to the BCM being the organiser of the Soweto march and protest and is not only limited to the organisational role of the SASM who led the rejection of subjects being taught in Afrikaans. For example, George Wauchope was an exiled activist who returned to Soweto's hometown in 1972. From there, Wauchope worked for Biko's organisation called the Black People's Convention and was its chairman in Johannesburg. Here he organised widely in surrounding areas and for these reasons. After the massacre, his name made it to the secret police's most-wanted list, and he subsequently was arrested for hundreds of days at a time (Malan 2000). Malan (2000) describes Wauchope's role as significant in raising consciousness on behalf of the BCM before and after Soweto.

On 16 June, over 10,000 students, children, boys and girls gathered early in the morning to protest the changing of their language of instruction. The Soweto Students' Representative Council (SSRC) were at the front lines of the march, holding banners and slogans. Participants adopted an assortment of nonviolent direct action methods, and the presence of children, women and many students who had not been politically active prior took away the radical element of mass protest that was evident in the workers' movements or the armed branches of rival political movements such as the ANC and the PAC. Even with police and anti-protest forces in and near Soweto, prior to the rally, it had to have been difficult for the thousands of children and students who were drawing anti-Afrikaans language slogans to anticipate that bullets and police dogs would meet them. During the middle of the protest march, police intervened by setting dogs into the walking paths of unarmed marching children. Police then let off scores of gunfire. Rocks and stones were later thrown back from the unarmed crowd as they fatally shot dozens of children.

The fallout from Soweto was colossal. These events took the NP by surprise and fostered vast moral outrage from domestic and international observers. 'The front page of the news was shocking that day, it shocked the country and the world,' notes Sahn Venter (Venter 2005: 56). The incident went viral through domestic and international networks (Burns 1976). Dissent arose in all townships throughout South Africa, and as Jamie Frueh points out, 'Soweto forced people

to notice and even question apartheid's political reality' (Frueh 2003: 87). Widespread mobilisation exploded throughout all townships, and while violent in some cases and nonviolent in others, the protests were of a new form given they were diverse and not limited to a single group or political faction (Mxolisi Ndlovu 1998). A powerful account of the killings in Soweto is given in the autobiographical novel *Kaffir Boy* in which the author (who was present the day of the protest) recalls how police opened fire without warning. From all angles, the township children were attempting to escape a heavily armed police force but continuously dropped down like swatted flies (Mathabane 1986).

Although there are historians that discount the role of Soweto, for example, Spence and Welsh (2011) note that the uprising had been costly in terms of fatalities, but it did not threaten the state, our comparative assessment reveals that the events of June 1976 turned out to be the most shifting and transformative of any apartheid massacres. A particular image from the massacre served as an important symbol of the struggle against apartheid for domestic and international audiences. A civilian photographer (Sam Nzima) took dozens of photos, and one of them contained a blood-covered dead 13-year-old boy named Hector Pieterse being carried by a sibling with a devastated township looming in the background. As historian James Sanders notes, the photo of Pieterse first appeared on 16 June 1976 in a late edition of the press outlet *World*, but then on 17 June, the photo was featured on the front page in the *Washington Post*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Daily Mail*, the *Times* among others (Sanders 2011: 184). The students at Soweto embodied the BCM and served as the central signifying force of its ideological project. Every June since 1976 saw millions protest in remembrance of the Soweto uprisings and Hector Pieterse (Ndlovu 1998: 78). The NP, however, was dismayed at the native revitalisation that went into Soweto and responded to the protests with anti-communist rhetoric. For example, the minister of justice (Jimmy Kruger) stated, 'Why do they walk with upraised fists? Surely this is the sign of the Communist Party?' (Clark and Worger 2013: 83).

Of all the collective challenges to the status quo and massacres that took place during apartheid, none possessed the same ideological dexterity as the BCM organised Soweto protest. The 1984 Vaal uprisings were a spontaneous violent protest formed in reaction to rent increases. Dozens were killed, and there has since been noted to have been over 6 million USD in property damage

as a result (Zuern 2011: 34). In 1985, the NP issued a state of emergency, yet protests still ensued. Another case of severe repression took place in the 1985 Mamelodi killings when tens of thousands challenged the high rents of a local council. From 1984 to 88, over 35,000 SADF troops were deployed to townships, and 45,000 persons were detained (Norval 1996: 247). Furthermore, in the Winterveld massacre, a large crowd gathered to protest police brutality in City Rocks stadium in Bophuthatswana. Dissent was a response to arrests of youths carried out at a squatter settlement. Meanwhile, buses were burnt as unaffiliated dissidents joined into the interaction between protesters and police. Western newspapers briefly picked this story up as a highlight noted alongside the mass violence occurring in that township and other parts of the country.

The 1990 Odi killings involved a large crowd of anywhere between 50,000 to 100,000 who demanded to chief magistrate Mr NC Greyling to attempt to be re-incorporated into the homeland of South Africa proper (Daily Report 1990). Police opened fire, and many fire and army trucks were set simultaneously. The last of the seven massacres under attention is the 1992 Ciskei massacre which occurred in Bisho when the ANC was already in negotiation with the NP to end the project of apartheid. The ANC had demanded that de Klerk replace Gqozo. However, the President refused and claimed Ciskeia was not under apartheid authority. Led by the ANC and the SACP (Ronnie Kasrils and Steve Tshwete), protesters attempted to break through a wall of security forces. The Ciskei Defence Force shot 28 and wounded over 400. The 1980s were politically unstable as violence between government and opposition frequently arose in townships. Large scale civil resistance also emerged with a unified mass opposition movement in the United Democratic Front (which later turned into the Mass Democratic Movement). Concurrently, the international anti-apartheid movement grew in strength.

## **5. Theorizing Soweto's Profound Impact**

Every single case in Table 1. experienced increased mobilisation after the incident of repression in the day following state violence. However, not all acts of state repression on movements, protests, and bouts of dissent had the same historical impact on the apartheid status quo. Soweto is an archetypal case of the phenomenon or process known as political jiu-jitsu and repression backfire in the

literature on nonviolent civil resistance (Hess and Martin 2006; Sutton et al. 2014; Aytac et al. 2018). The event caused greater protest mobilisation after repression, went viral domestically and internationally, spurred domestic and international moral outrage, and brought about sanctions and shaming against the regime. Above all, Soweto dislocated the political status quo. It propelled new waves of recruitment to movements in exile at the time, such as the ANC and PAC. Police repression directed at civilians brought about significant diplomatic pressures against the state. The most significant aspect of Soweto was that it exemplified repression backfire and turned out to be a development that led to structural change and dislocation that opened up political contingency. The combination of ideational (BCM) and material forces (physical violence and communicational spreading of the event) contributed to the manifestation of this mass dislocation.

In contrast, in 1960, the Sharpeville massacre also spurred a backfire process, but the outcome was not as transformative as Sharpeville did not possess the same ideological underpinning as Soweto. Put differently, Sharpeville did contain an ideological underpinning but was rooted in opposition groups that engaged in formal political terrain against the NP. Soweto signified the message of the BCM, who invented a new political frontier – one that operated outside the realms of state discourse. This is why it is important to consider that some instances of backfire result in more transformative change than others. In accounting for these phenomena, discursive and identity-based approaches to political analysis are fruitful to adopt. For example, while scholars have found that any protest-state interaction can backfire and the likelihood of this happening increases in cases that feature severe repression (10 or more fatalities) being inflicted on a diverse unarmed/nonviolent protest in an urban area (Anisin 2018; 2019), and others have argued that for an act of repression to backfire it must be 1) perceived to be unjust by audiences, and 2) for there to be media capability to circulate information about the act (Hess and Martin 2006), there also exist specific ideational categories of this phenomenon that warrant investigation.

Symbolic meanings get associated with acts of repression and tend to centre around the repressor and the repressed identities. I draw on a theoretical tradition stemming from the Essex School of Ideology and Discourse Analysis to assess these dynamics. This theoretical tradition is based on analysis of discourse which is assumed to comprise linguistic and non-linguistic practices (Howarth 2000). Discourses are qualitative, historically contingent, and are relational. As

articulated by the NP, the political project and government of apartheid were supported by a discursive structure that was indeed highly repressive and contingent. Apartheid was not simply a black versus white discursive articulation. Rather, non-Volk white, coloured and Indian populations were negated and differentiated by ruling Afrikaners with their construction and subject position of a Volk myth. The Volk myth was forged into a social imaginary when the Bantu Self-Government Bill was established (Norval 1996: 169).

The BCM articulated the first substantial alternative to apartheid hegemony which brings us to the key theoretical assumption that no discourse and accompanying ideological configuration is ever fully closed off. Political actors and movements possess the agency to articulate new discursive elements and alternative hegemonic practices. As noted by Laclau and Mouffe (2001 [1985]), ‘only the presence of a vast area of floating elements and the possibility of their articulation to opposite camps – which implies a constant redefinition of the latter – is what constitutes the terrain permitting us to define a practice as hegemonic’ (Laclau and Mouffe 2001: 136-7). Discourses are also intrinsically antagonistic. When white police suppressed unarmed black students in a public setting in June of 1976, internal contradictions of apartheid structure were revealed grandly to domestic and international audiences. The antagonisms between protesters and white police were not a new development for the political scene of South Africa but rather were the underpinnings of the regime’s discursive totality. They had yet to be revealed in such form as Soweto was a hegemonic dislocation that exposed the limits of NP discursive structure and reasserted the contingency of social reality. A dislocation is precisely the failure of a structure, and this failure is what compels subjects to act in the political arena ‘to assert anew’ political subjectivity (Howarth 2000: 13).

## **6. Soweto and the Historical Trajectory of the Apartheid Collapse**

When compared to six other cases of severe state repression, Soweto and the preceding BCM campaign spurred a rupture in the hegemonic order of apartheid. Through images of white police shooting black youth and school children, the event exemplified an alternative hegemony that the BCM articulated. Indeed, these dynamics are not traditional in the sense of mainstream research on state repression and social movement mobilisation. They specifically pertain to a

recent point made by Morgan (2020), who argues that successful movement strategies cannot always be identified by examining movement outcomes in repressive contexts. To understand success, we must move outside the basis of 'externally-defined criteria' that are universal (Morgan 2020). At Soweto, antecedent conditions (including BCM organisation and political action) resulted in antagonisms between the ruling party and its suppressed population getting exemplified on a grand stage. The Black People's Convention President declared that Soweto ushered 'a new era of political consciousness' in South Africa (Kalley et al. 1999: 415). Although some reasonably negative viewpoints on the BCM (such as Marx 1992) claim that the BCM's emphasis on values ended up protecting the established order due to an inability to wage a frontal assault on the state through force, such perspectives fail to consider the deeper ideational forces that were active in the context under attention.

In the struggle against the NP and its project of apartheid, opposition movements that mobilised resources and were best organised were also engaged in political conflict within the realms of apartheid discourse. The BCM, on the other hand, was not as tightly organised as, say, the ANC, but it did have an ideological message that was substantially different from other oppositional movements of its time. Biko differentiated the BCM from other opposition groups and apartheid challengers by gearing the movement away from ideas of racial integration and into a more transformative political realm,

Nowhere is the arrogance of the liberal ideology demonstrated so well as in their insistence that the problems of the country can only be solved by a bilateral approach involving both black and white. This has, by and large, come to be taken in all seriousness as the *modus operandi* in South Africa by all those who claim they would like a change in the status quo (Biko 2005:20).

These ideas were integrated into the message of the BCM in order to abandon the status quo of a one-way course of action featuring 'whites doing all the talking and the blacks the listening' (Biko 2005: 20). To re-centre attention on the indigenous population, the BCM engaged in a discursive endeavour. For example, Tshepo Moloji observed school settings in areas where BCM ideology had been advocated and found that those students influenced by the BCM ideology experienced a significant 'behavioural change' that resulted in newfound self-confidence (Moloji

2011). These are significant points if we consider that recent research has revealed that protests can indeed induce changes in racial identity, and such an effect does not simply dissipate after a given protest cycle (Zepeda-Millan and Wallace 2013). The BCM also built-up resilience in an oppressed population through leadership seminars and formation schools in which participants were taught to be critical of their social environments and identify interests that were embedded in power structures (Morgan and Baert 2017).

An interesting recent dialogue between Mahmood Mamdani and Michael Neocosmos sheds light on political agency and historical change in South Africa. Both engage with the question of the extent to which the BCM changed the course of the liberation movement. Neocosmos (2016) adopts insights from Badiou to theorise emancipatory transformation through subjective processes with the ultimate aim of human equality. His framework is based on the premise that ‘experiences of emancipatory politics forma dialectic combination of expressive and excessive thought’ (Neocosmos 2016: 27). The BCM thus overturned social classification, contested existing political representation forms, and reconfigured the social division of labour between races (Neocosmos 2016: 161). This overturning of social positions was necessary for constructing new human relationships, argues Neocosmos. A truly emancipatory political movement must seek to achieve universal aims rather than base itself on any ‘particularistic’ temporal concern; otherwise, it will find itself difficult to sustain. Neocosmos argues that the BCM represented a transformational project. In contrast, Mamdani argues that Biko did not repudiate race but imagined it broadly and creatively – as a historical and political force rather than a permanent condition. Turning back to universalism, argues Mamdani would forfeit plurality and ‘the ground gained over the past few decades’ of the liberation movement.

While my aim is not to engage with the implications that liberation struggles have on contemporary politics in the context under attention, Neocosmos brings up a very salient point in that the setting up of the UDF in 1984 was based on the idea of ‘non-racialism’ that was invented by the BCM – something that could ‘only be achieved in political action as an affirmative emancipatory vision’ (Neocosmos 2016: 161).

Along with the profoundly transformative subjective impact of the BCM, this study has demonstrated that the availability of greater resources for the struggle that ensued in the 1980s was not random as internationally, Soweto triggered

the US anti-apartheid movement. In Oakland, California, Leo Robinson of the Local 10 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) began a boycott of the apartheid regime in July 1976 following what he perceived to be brutal state repression in Soweto. For the next decade and a half, Robinson was active in national trade union caucuses mobilising against the regime to offer an asymmetric effort of political support. By 1979, the neighbouring city of Berkeley, California, became the 'first US city to opt for divestment, through a public ballot initiative spearheaded by Mayor Gus Newport' (Minter and Hill 2008: 779). Over 90 different US companies divested away from South Africa (Clark and Worger 2013: 102). As such, the 1980s saw an explosion of oppositional activity, including the emergence of the United Democratic Front (UDF), Mass Democratic Movement (MDM), numerous student associations (AZASO and AZAYO), and increased violence in townships (as highlighted in cases shown in Table 1).

Additionally, during the early 1980s, the most radical Leftists were expelled from the ANC. Friedman (2011) describes this eviction of 'a small group of socialists' who sought to steer the African National Congress (ANC) in a new strategic direction. They then formed themselves into the 'Marxist Workers Tendency of the African National Congress'. The members of the group were Martin Legassick, Paula Ensor, David Hemson and Rob Petersen, among others. Friedman (2011) notes that their chief aim was to persuade the ANC and its union ally SACTU to become vehicles for the socialist revolution. The Left, however, was on the decline and remained in decline as time went on. Hurt (2016) presents data on the annual value added by industry (as a percentage of South African GDP by different industries) and finds that the manufacturing industry decreased nearly twofold (from 19.4% in 1995 to 10.3% in 2013) – this is by far the largest decrease of any industry in South Africa, and importantly, is symbolic of the decline of the Left.

When it comes to the historical impact of the BCM, although less prominent in the 1980s than in prior decades, the BCM still played a role – especially in its participation in an all-inclusive black political conference that was held in 1989 alongside the Mass Democratic Movement – a conference that was key in setting out pre-conditions and an outline for a post-apartheid constitution (Kalley et al. 1999: 507). Ultimately, though the state responded with even greater repression by arresting hundreds of BCM members after the massacre and then murdering Biko, these repressive actions could not rid the nation of the effect already

instilled by the BCM's discursive campaign. Nelson Mandela later said of Biko: 'They had to kill him to prolong the life of Apartheid.'

## 7. Conclusion

In light of popular historical accounts which have emphasised that the emergence of a mass nonviolent movement in the 1980s was a principal factor in the downfall of apartheid, this study has pointed to a different set of dynamics that have been under-theorised concerning the apartheid collapse. In the late 1960s and leading into the 1970s, the BCM helped native and nonwhite segments to step outside of the oppressive realm of NP-dictated apartheid politics. The movement re-empowered a vastly suppressed population that for decades had been told that they were second and third-rate citizens in comparison to a ruling minority. It also strategically disconnected itself from engagement in formal political outlets and the pretence of NP constructed myths that underpinned apartheid. The Soweto massacre and its antecedent organisational campaign launched by the BCM ended up being more than a simple challenge of the apartheid status quo. When white police severely repressed unarmed students at Soweto, the event exemplified central antagonisms underpinning apartheid discourse. This historically pivotal protest massacre dislocated the structure of apartheid discourse and paved the way for a hegemonic struggle. The historical importance of Soweto is not only in that it was a critical juncture and catalyst for the anti-apartheid movement that followed but also because of the meaning that was attached to it by publics. The event signified a clash between the subjugated native population on the one hand and the contradictions and myths of NP hegemony on the other. During the 1980s, a decrease in costliness in terms of dissent only arose as a by-product of a change in cognisance and collective understanding of newly found political opportunities that emerged due to Soweto and its antecedent organisational BCM-led campaign.

On the one hand, the implications of this paper pertain to the role that the BCM and Soweto had in the larger trajectory of the apartheid collapse. The analysis presents us with a different set of considerations compared to previous noteworthy claims. For instance, when compared to A. Marx's (1992) Gramscian framework in which it is argued that the BCM's impact was limited because 'ideas alone cannot account for the massive unrest and anger expressed by

many more than had been formally affiliated with the movement' (Marx 1992: 71), several key points are worth considering. The dislocating of the apartheid political status quo that occurred as a result of Soweto was not only made possible due to the physical violence that transpired in the township and went viral through media networks. Audiences attach meaning to such events and the identities of the repressed. This is why some cases of repression backfire result in greater transformative change than others. On the other hand, the implications of this analysis also pertain to the dualistic nature of socio-historical change – both ideational and material factors appear to be necessary to consider if we are to understand social and protest movements in repressive contexts.

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**BOOK REVIEW**





## Book Review

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**Eddy Maloka, *When Foreign Becomes Domestic: The Interplay of National Interests, Pan-Africanism and Internationalism in South Africa's Foreign Policy*, Johannesburg: Ssali Publishing House, 2019: 243.**

South Africa's foreign policy remains the subject of scholarly debate and critics. The debate and critics are mainly on South Africa's behaviour at the bilateral and multilateral level within and outside the African continent. Demarcated into seven Chapters, Maloka's book titled *When Foreign Becomes Domestic: The Interplay of National Interests, Pan-Africanism and Internationalism in South Africa's Foreign Policy* lean on a historical approach and locates South Africa's foreign policy on three interlinked pillars, namely, national interests, Pan-Africanism, and Internationalism.

Titled *Foreign Policy Governance*, Chapter One draws in the Medium-Term Framework serving as a systematic plan of the ruling party to translate electoral mandate into action for its five-year term in office. The National Development Plan Vision 2030 serves as the long-term governmental plan for stated objectives. Through these documents and others, the Chapter manifests the interplay of domestic and foreign policy, as the said documents inform and shape the activities of governmental departments at home and abroad to respond to domestic needs. The author demonstrates that foreign policymaking and implementation is a multifaceted activity involving state actors and non-state actors ranging from the President, Deputy President, Minister in the Presidency, advisers, Ministers heading governmental departments, South African missions abroad, and research institutions (p. 1-37).

Chapter Two maps out the African National Congress (ANC) stands on the African continent during its years as a liberation movement backed by the region through the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and a period after apartheid

wherein its Africa Policy became integrated into a broader government plan (p.42). By so doing, the author detailed the contribution made by Thabo Mbeki through his African Renaissance vision by revisiting the continental institutions marked by the transformation of the OAU into African Union (AU), the establishment of initiatives such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) (p. 47). The Chapter also shows continuity on Jacob Zuma's Presidency as South Africa backed the African Agenda by calling for the establishment of African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises, which served as a temporary structure until the African Standby Force (ASF) materialised. The author also draws from South Africa's contribution to continental infrastructural development through initiatives such as the Zuma-led Presidential Infrastructure Championing Initiative (p. 53-55).

In Chapter Three, Maloka demonstrates the interplay between national developments and foreign policy by dissecting *The Decline of South African Foreign Policy* (p. 71). In so doing, the Chapter analyses the impact made by the political transition which culminated with Zuma being the President of the ANC and that of the country, the administrative in-competencies and involvement in political battles by the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), the damage brought by allegations of state capture on South Africa's international image and Zuma's preoccupation with his personal battles which have to a large extent drawn his attention away from matters of international affairs. The decline is located within Zuma's second term (2014-2017) as the President of the ANC and South Africa (p. 102). During this term, the Presidency became a victim to a futile exercise showed by the disbandment of the former President Thabo Mbeki Policy Coordination and Advisory Services with the short-lived Foreign Policy and National Security Advisors, thus leaving the office of the Presidency very weak on international engagements matters (p. 105). On the other hand, DIRCO was drawn into the Presidential tussle between former President Zuma and Kgalema Motlanthe in 2014 and the 2017 Presidential race between Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma and today's President, Cyril Ramaphosa. These developments, along with allegations of state capture, gravitated South Africa on the line of African failed states and are attributed to have weakened Pretoria's (South Africa's capital and administrative hub of the national government) international image and prestige (p. 107).

Chapter Four dissects the international engagements of the ANC as a non-

state actor and the governing party. The Chapter analyses the international engagements of ANC wherein the party partake in international solidarity to promote human rights, peace, justice, and the right to self-determination of other nations (p. 133-148). Titled *A Critique of the National Development Plan*, Chapter Five demonstrates the narrow economic view on South Africa's international engagements advanced by the National Development Plan (NDP) and its failure to acknowledge that foreign policy is multidimensional. To this end, the author concludes that the National Planning Commission gleaned data from pessimistic views advanced by non-state actors on South Africa's foreign policy while ignoring practical developments at the DIRCO, Southern African region, and Africa at large. Significantly, the author avers that the said narrow economic view has led to a decline in South Africa's foreign policy articulated in Chapter Three (p. 162-173).

Chapter Six, titled *National Interests and Human Rights*, analyses the interplay between South Africa's national interests and human rights, building on the two case studies that have sparked a heated about Pretoria's behaviour in the international community, notably the country's objection to arrest and handover the former Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir to the International Criminal Court, its ultimate decision to withdraw from the Court, and a constant refusal to grant the Dalai Lama a visa. The author taps on the controversy by clarifying that South Africa's foreign policy implementation, including her commitment to human rights, is driven by her national interests and those of the African continent (African Agenda) and the international solidary, which does not include the successionist posture advanced by the Tibetan leader, the Dalai Lama. Thus, in both cases, Pretoria was guided by her national interests and the African Agenda, and the two take precedence in Pretoria's international engagements (p. 176-210).

Titled *The African Diaspora*, Chapter Seven delves on South Africa's cooperation with other African countries and the AU to reach out to the African Diaspora. The author shows that the initiative gained momentum during the Mbeki administration and early days of Zuma's incumbency but faded after the 2012 ANC Elective and Policy Conference, which declined South Africa's foreign policy (p. 213-233).

Flowing from the above, it follows the logic that this book makes a significant contribution to academic and policy discourses on South Africa's foreign

policy. It is based on sound research with much of the data gleaned from the underutilised sources ranging from the ANC Elective and Policy Conference, Strategy and Tactics and Election Manifesto and other documents portraying the ANC approach to international relations as a political organisation and a governing party. The use of sources from governmental departments and the author's experience and insider view at the DIRCO has bridged a gap between theory and practice of foreign policy, thus showing that South African foreign policymaking and implementation is a complex exercise requiring collaboration between scholars and practitioners. To this end, the book is a useful source for policymakers and practitioners, scholars, and students of international relations.